[Mr. K. Parameswaran Pillai.]

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS.—(*Contd*).

Demand XXII—Public Works Department—(*Contd*).

The Council then resumed the discussion on Demand XXII—Public Works Department.

PRESIDENT: I shall now call upon Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai to make the motion standing against his name.

Mr. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I do not wish to move it.

The following motion was not therefore made.

***Motion* 167.**

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI:

167. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 4,17,924 for buildings (original works and maintenance or annual repairs) by Rs. 100.

***Motion* 168.**

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

168. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,25,915 for communications (original works) by Rs. 40,000.

At the time of the general discussion of the budget I pointed out that the major portion of the amount withdrawn from the allotment for the P. W. D. was taken out of original works. We find from the budget that a sum of Rs. 85,000 alone has been assigned for original works, including the metalling and the construction of new roads. Of this Rs. 85,000, a sum of Rs. 40,000 is to be spent upon three works in the High Range, *viz.*, the remetalling of the Munnar-Devicolam road,—Rs. 3,000; the re-metalling of the Kumili-Devicolam road—the ghat portion from Devicolam to Periakanal,—Rs. 30,000; and renewing the platform of the Kuttampuzha bridge, 28th mile, High Range Road, Rs. 7,000.

Looking at the question from another standpoint, we find that the amount allotted for the construction of new roads is only Rs. 33,600, and that, of this amount, Rs. 30,000 is for the Devicolam road.

Now, Sir, ever since the Popular Assembly was created, the cry has been for a more equitable distribution of expenditure in respect of taluks and Divisions, regard being had to population, revenue and importance. Apparently, no heed has been paid to this by the Government. We see that, in answer to the following interpellation of my friend, Mr. Panjikaran, *viz.*, whether the Government would be pleased to state the number of miles of road in the Shertallai taluk; the number of miles of road in each of the other taluks in the State; the amount of money yearly spent for public roads in each taluk in the State for the last ten years; and the proportion the expenditure on roads in each taluk bears to its revenue, area and population,—a statement containing the mileage of roads in each taluk, etc., has been placed on the table. The Government have also stated that it is not possible to get the statistics for the last ten years.

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Although representations have been made for the last 13 or 14 years to the Government to distribute the allotment for the P. W. D. to the different taluks and Divisions in the State in proportion to their population, income and importance, Government are not even in possession of figures showing the income from each taluk and the amount that is being allotted to each taluk for public works. From the figures furnished by Government I find that in the taluk of Devicolam the expenditure per head of population for roads is Rs. 1·6, whereas in all the other taluks the expenditure per head of population varied from Re. 1 to Rs. 8, the highest being Rs. 8. So it will be seen that the allotment for the Devicolam taluk is twice the highest amount that is allotted to any other taluk in the State. The least amount allotted is for Parur, the average being Rs. 2 per head of population, Shertallai ·2, Kartigappalli ·3, Karunagapalli ·3, Ambalapuzha ·7, Kunnatnad ·2 and so on. We have thus already lavished on Devicolam more than about 16 times what has been spent on an average taluk in the plains and we find that the expenditure on this taluk is out of all proportion to its importance and also to its population

In regard to the Munnar-Devicolam road itself, it appears to me that this is a road not very much used for cart traffic. In Devicolam itself, as far as I know, there is only one bullock cart and the provisions for Devicolam go by pack-horses from Bodi. This road is only used by a few Europeans and Devicolam is the only town served by this road. So, there is absolutely no reason why so much money should be spent upon re-metalling it.

PRESIDENT: May I correct you with regard to the cart traffic on this road? I spent about three weeks at Munnar recently and I found that there were several carts using this road. I met every day half a dozen carts during the time I was there.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: At that time the portion of the Devicolam-Kumili road from Devicolam to Periakanal was being metalled. These carts were evidently carrying metal to the portion that was being metalled.

As I have already submitted, Devicolam is provided with provisions from Bodi by pack-horses. There is no other use to which this road is put except for motor traffic and foot traffic. So far as foot traffic is concerned, I think that there is no need to remetal it at this time.

Then, as regards the Kumili-Devicolam road, it is about 70 miles and it will take perhaps 30 or 40 years before the road is completed. It is absolutely of no use to the ryots, because it passes mainly through uninhabited places except two or three tea estates and a few cardamom estates. I have also been informed that there is no timber to be exploited from the regions through which this road passes, so that it appears to me that this road will be of very little use to the ordinary public, except perhaps to a few estate owners on the line of the road. For these reasons, it seems to me that this is a heavy expenditure of money in regard to one taluk and out of all proportion to its relative status, and that this money should be properly conserved and utilised for improving and constructing communications in those taluks that are poorly

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[Mr. R. Everard.]

served in respect of communications like Shertallai and Karunagapalli. With these words I move my proposition.

MR. R. EVERARD: Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai has said that only a small allotment has been provided under communications and original works. May I be permitted to say that, if we include bridges also under this head—for, without bridges, we cannot open the roads,—the allotment necessarily increases. He also compared the percentage of expenditure on roads per head of population in various taluks, and said that the Devicolam taluk received more attention than all others. You will not be developing a country, if you do not spend more on certain parts of the country than on certain others.

Going into details, the provision made for the Munnar-Devicolam road is Rs. 5,000 and not Rs. 3,000 as mentioned by Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai. Though it would be a matter of pleasure for me, if I could find it possible to accede to the wishes of the mover, I regret that my responsibility for the good condition of the road does not permit me to accept the motion, which, therefore, I have to oppose. Munnar and Devicolam, as the members know, have heavy rainfall, and the roads on the High Range get badly damaged, being on steep side along ground, and this road runs on the edge of a high precipice. Frequent complaints of the bad condition of the road in question have been received from those who use the road, most of whom have motor vehicles. The maintenance grant of Rs. 350 per mile is inadequate and periodical renewals are necessary. The complaint about the bad condition of the road was made in 1920 and an estimate for metalling the road was sanctioned in January 1921. But funds could not then be provided for the work. As the work is urgent, the provision made in the budget is necessary, so that a beginning may be made. As long as I am held responsible for the condition of the road, I must be allowed the necessary funds. If even such small provisions are proposed for disallowance, how can the roads be kept in good order? As I said, the road runs on the edge of a steep precipice and the outer edges of the road are likely to be washed away, and if these repairs are not undertaken in time, the cost of restoration would run into thousands of rupees. The traffic between Munnar and Devicolam is also very heavy, Munnar being the chief business place and Devicolam the head-quarters of the District where all the public offices are located.

The next item is Rs. 30,000 for the proposed Kumili-Devicolam road—the ghat portion from Devicolam to Periakanal. Sir, the road in question forms part of a system of main arterial roads proposed for opening up the High Range, and to provide outlets for the tea and cardamom industries and also for the exploitation of timber. An estimate for constructing the road from Devicolam to Periakanal was sanctioned for Rs. 1,07,090. The work has been going on from 1917, the K. D. H. P. Company having undertaken it. The road is expected to be finished in 1098 and, according to the terms of the agreement, Government will be bound to make the first instalment of payment soon after the work is completed, and so the necessary provision is made in the budget. Being an obligatory payment, the

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provision is necessary. I hope the House will realise the situation and pass the demand.

The third item is Rs. 7,000 for renewing the platform of the Kuttampuzha bridge, 20th mile, High Range road. My responsibility for the safety of this bridge, and therefore the safety of the traffic that passes over it, leaves me no alternative but to oppose the motion, and I do so very strongly. The need for the work was felt long ago and an estimate was sanctioned in 1914. This cannot wait any longer. Owing to want of funds and other reasons it has not been possible to carry out the work earlier. Unless the platform is renewed, we may have to close the road to traffic altogether, if danger to the life of men and beasts is to be averted. Heavy timber traffic passes over this bridge and the Conservator of Forests complained to Government that, owing to the dangerous condition of the bridge, his timber contractor was able to convey only 37 out of 5,000 logs and that in consequence he was suffering considerable loss. The Government were also obliged to extend the period of contract to him on this account; and, if the reconstruction of the platform is delayed longer, the Government will probably render themselves liable for damages to the timber contractor. The House will thus see that the bridge, besides being dangerous to life, also prevents the exploitation of forest timber. In view of these facts, I hope the mover will see his way to withdraw his motion. The estimate having been sanctioned eight years back, it is being revised to suit current costs of materials and labour. I cannot therefore accept the motion.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: The Chief Engineer was speaking of some agreement. I want to know what it is.

MR. R. EVERARD: It is for constructing a road from Devicolam to Periakanal. The agreement was entered into by the Government with Messrs. K. D. H. P. Company. They spend all the money for the road, and after the road is finished we have to pay the amount in seven equal instalments. The road will be finished in 1098. So we shall have to make one payment in the coming year.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: May I know whether the agreement is for constructing a road from Devicolam to Periakanal only or from Devicolam to Kumili?

MR. R. EVERARD: Only up to Pariakanal, which is about 10 miles.

PRESIDENT: This payment is in pursuance of a contract which was entered into by Government in 1915.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: May I know whether it is an enforceable contract?

PRESIDENT: I suppose the contract is enforceable.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: We are not aware of the terms.

PRESIDENT: The amount is repayable in seven annual instalments.

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[Mr. R. Dhanukoti Pillai.]

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR : The Chief Engineer has sufficiently explained the matter. The Company was asked to complete the road by finding the necessary funds for the same. The first instalment of repayment by Government is in 1098. So that, where you have entered into an agreement with the Company in the matter, I do not know whether there is any difficulty for them to enforce the contract at all. They have only to file a suit.

MR. R. DHANUKOTI PILLAI: Sir, may I be permitted to say a few words with regard to some point which Mr. K. Parameśvaran Pillai raised in the course of the discussion? He said that the Devicolam-Kumili road could not be of much use to the Forest Department. But I have to explain to this House that at present we are not able to extract any timber in the High Range Division for want of roads. The Kumili-Devicolam road is likely to be of much use to my department, if it is opened right through. We have in the High Range some extensive teak and blackwood forests. For want of road facilities we are not able to extract much timber from them. At present we have to be satisfied with one or two British Indian contractors to whom we are forced to sell these valuable timbers for almost a nominal price. For teakwood we get about 8 or 9 annas per cubic foot, while for blackwood there is not even this demand. The best blackwood was sold by me at 6 annas per cubic foot and that too with great difficulty. This Kumili-Devicolam road is, no doubt, a costly undertaking, but, when it is completed, it is sure to open up a rich tract and bring in increased revenue to Government.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: May I know from the Conservator of Forests whether the road that has already been constructed, or in the course of construction, *i. e.*, up to Periakanal, will be of any use to his department?

MR. R. DHANUKOTI PILLAI: Not at present. Tho road so far completed is useful to the department now, to extract timber from the surrounding forests for supply to the P. W. D. for the construction of buildings at Devicolam and Munnar. Before this road was opened, we had to obtain the timber required for Government use from the K. D. H. P. Company.

PRESIDENT: It is part of the through road.

MR. R. DHANUKOTI PILLAI: With regard to the other point raised in regard to the renewal of the platform of the Kuttampuzha bridge, I have to say that, in connection with the scheme for the formation of villages along the western outlet road by disafforesting belts of forest land on either side, Government had given a contract in 1093 to Mr. Chotani for the removal of tree-growth from an area of 500 acres at Puyankutti. This contractor has not been able to remove any timber from this area for the last 4 years owing to the bad condition

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of the Kuttampuzha bridge, as it is the only way by which he could transport his timber. We tried to help him several times by allowing him to cut some trees and do the repairs to the bridge himself, but such repairs were of no use. He has been repeatedly complaining to the Forest Department and to the P. W. D. The latter did some patch-work to the bridge, but they could not long stand the transport of heavy timber. We were therefore forced to give extensions to his contract several times. In the meantime the Land Revenue Commissioner was complaining to Government that, by giving extensions to his contract, we were impeding the progress of his *puduval* registry. But, unfortunately for us, in the auction notice of this coupe, we had published that there was a cartable road by which timber from the coupe could be transported to Cochin and other places and the contractor has been referring to this also in his complaints. This is, however, a legal point, and our friend, Mr. Subba Aiyar, will be able to tell us what our position is in regard to this. Government have now again given a further extension to the contractor, because it was found that, without the Kuttampuzha bridge being put in order, it was absolutely impossible for him to remove his timber from the coupe. In fairness to the contractor it has also to be admitted that he has lost heavily in the transaction. He has spent several thousands in this coupe and he has not so far removed any timber worth mentioning thence. In these circumstances, I would earnestly request Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai not to press his motion.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: Almost every elected member comes with a mandate from his constituency to move for more and better roads. My constituency too has been pressing me to submit its disabilities and secure the necessary means of communication. But let us not be carried away by our parochial interests. As regards the Kumili-Devicolam road, let me assure this House that it is a very useful one. It is necessary for hundreds of cardamom estates, all of them Indian-owned. It would serve to open up thousands of acres of virgin forest and grass-land. We cry for more and more rice-lands. The Director of Agriculture may be able to tell you that these grass-lands are the richest in Travancore and fit for the cultivation of all cereals including wheat. He may tell you of that vast area called Anukkarakandam, which has been awaiting the plough for generations.

Another noteworthy point is the fact that the cardamoms raised in Travancore have to be taken to Cumbam, miles away in the Madura District, for a market. Bombay sends its agents now to Cumbam for cardamoms. If this road be opened, I believe Kumili may become the cardamom market of South India.

This road, however, should have started from Kumili, and I fear that the work is progressing from the wrong end. When some time back a few miles of this road were roughly opened from Kumili, a cardamom

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[Mr. S. Krishna Aiyar.]

planter pushed up a cart-road, too near the plantations, and there was jubilation among the ryots.

The tracts of land that this road will serve have great potentialities and, if completed, it will be a real service to the general public and bring more and more revenue to the State.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Reading between the lines of Mr. S. Krishna Aiyar's speech, it would appear that he is a planters' vakil. I quite agree with Mr. K. Parameswaran Pillai that there should be an equitable distribution of roads in the different parts of the country. But I disagree with what he has said about this particular road. Probably, Mr. Krishna Aiyar knows more about the Devicolam and Munnar areas than most of us here. Mr. Mackie may also give us information on this point.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I also know something about the place, as I have travelled over this road.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: I beg your pardon. Whatever it is, we must never forget the fact that the planters have brought much wealth into our country. But for them, the High Range would have continued to be a wilderness and the habitation of elephants, tigers and other wild animals. Every facility should, therefore, be given to the planters, in the way of communications, to open up the country. Speaking of roads, I beg to be permitted to make an observation. I have travelled a great deal in the Districts, and I have noticed that, while grooves are formed in the middle of the road by heavy traffic, both sides of it, being seldom used, are left intact. When roads are repaired, every portion is cut up and re-metalled. I cannot understand why the two sides which are not worn out should be repaired. Will it not be enough, if the grooves alone are filled in with metal and road earth and rolled over? A great deal of saving can be effected thereby. I make this suggestion for the consideration of the Chief Engineer.

DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI: Sir, Mr. S. Krishna Aiyar admitted the necessity for a road from Kumili to Munnar to open up that part of the country for the purpose of bringing a large extent of unexplored lands under cultivation. I believe there are extensive areas in that region which could be brought under cultivation. Besides large tracts fit for paddy cultivation, there are lands which could be utilised for the cultivation of fruits. Travancore produces practically no fruits, except perhaps some sour mangoes and cashewnuts. I have seen a good portion of the tract that will be traversed by the proposed road and I know that there are extensive areas there suitable for the cultivation of fruits like oranges, limes and mangoes. Higher up the hills, the climate being temperate, even English fruits, such as apples, peaches and pears can well be grown.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: May I know if grass lands are useful for wheat cultivation?

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DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI: Wheat cultivation is being carried on at higher elevations and there is scope for extending this cultivation. If facilities for communication are provided, almost any crop could be cultivated on the High Range. The crops grown there have to be brought down to the plains, for which roads and other transport facilities are indispensable.

With regard to Mr. Krishna Aiyar's query whether the construction of the road should begin from Kumili or from Munnar, I wish to point out that there is already a cart-road from Munnar to Devicolam. Those who have seen the place will admit that this road runs along a steep precipice. On account of the heavy rainfall I am afraid that in the course of a few years the whole road will be washed away, if it is left uncared for and to prevent unnecessary waste it is absolutely necessary to metal that road and protect it from scouring before any further extension of it is thought of. The provision in the budget is for carrying out the above works, the postponement of which will result in unnecessary waste. I trust that the members on the other side of the House will bear this fact in mind when they vote on the motion.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: I generally support Mr. Parameswaran Pillai's motion. I find that item No. 102 is re-metalling the first three miles of the Munnar-Devicolam road. The department is going to re-metal the road. That means that the road was once metalled and that an allotment is made every year for maintenance and repairs. If, during rainy seasons roads were damaged, they could have been maintained from the funds available for that purpose by the department, and, if that is not done, it shows that the allotment for maintenance was not properly used. No doubt, from the estimate for 1095, I find that a sum of about Rs. 10,970 is to be spent for re-metalling the road and that out of that amount only Rs. 5,000 is to be spent next year. That shows that the work of re-metalling the whole road cannot be done next year, but only a part. That too may be washed away next year. If every year you are going to re-metal the road, I think that it is waste of money.

With regard to the Kumili-Devicolam road, my friend, Mr. S. Krishna Aiyar, and some other members assured this House that the opening of that road would be useful, and about Rs. one lakh is provided for that purpose. I wish to know whether this is the first instalment of the Rs. 30,000 to be spent, or whether the amount is divided into seven equal instalments.

PRESIDENT: It is not one lakh. The cost will be Rs. 2 lakhs. The original estimate was Rs. 1,70,000.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: We find that estimates are often revised. We do not know what the road will cost to the Government. Moreover, the Chief Engineer informed this House that the Company was asked to do this work. We do not know how much work is done by the Company. We were not told whether an estimate of the work done by the Company has been made. I do not know how this amount was arrived at.

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[Mr. John Mackie.]

As regards the bridge, the Conservator tells us that it is in a dangerous condition, and that it may cause damage to the contractor. So, with regard to that portion, I oppose the motion.

MR. DOMINIC TOMMAN: Sir, the Kumili-Devicolam road is very useful, not only to the inhabitants of the Devicolom and Peermade taluks, but also to those who hold estates in those places. I know that there are several people in Travancore who own estates in Devicolam. Now, the only means of access is either by the northern outlet road *via* Pollachi, or through Ammayanayakanur by the South Indian Railway going westwards. Had it not been for the lack of roads in the High Range, people would have taken more advantage of the possibilities of the High Range which contain the richest and most fertile places in Travancore. We have thousands of cultivable acres, lying there idle, for want of roads. The other day Mr. V. Kunjukrishna Pillai wanted to introduce chilli and wheat cultivation in Travancore. I know there is already wheat and chilli cultivation in the High Range and they do it as a profitable concern. By the opening of the Devicolam-Kumili road, easy access is given to the High Range. Much of our surplus population in towns and villages may find useful occupation in utilising the rich possibilities of the High Range.

As to the Munnar-Devicolam road, that is the only road giving access to the Division Cutcherry and other public offices in Devicolam. Owing to heavy rains, the road is likely to be washed off. It will have to be reconstructed. So it is absolutely necessary that the roads on the High Range should always be kept metalled.

As to the platform to the Kuttampuzha bridge, I know one instance, in which some planks were removed and travellers had to go back to get planks from Devicolam, and cover the bridge and pass over it. So, if one goes and finds the bridge plankless, one has no other way than to return to one's own place. So, it is absolutely necessary that this platform also should always be kept in thorough repair.

MR. JOHN MACKIE: After what he has heard, I think that Mr. K. Parameswaran Pillai might very well withdraw his motion.

With regard to the construction of the Devicolam-Munnar road, it is quite true, as the Conservator says, that it is of no use to him at present, but it will be useful to him in the future. Meantime it is of great use to the planting community already established there, and, surely, they are entitled to some consideration, as they pay considerable revenue to the State.

I would also point out that, where the road passes through the tea estates in the district, the land necessary for the road was given to the Government free of compensation.

Then with regard to the Kumili-Devicolam road, it is surprising to me that there should be any complaint against the construction of this road. After all that we have heard about the shortage of revenue, it is to me very extraordinary that there should be any opposition at all. This is the golden opportunity for opening up the country and thereby

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adding revenue to the State, not in small sums of money, but in lakhs of rupees, and I think Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai might well withdraw his motion.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI: It is well-known that the highlands of Travancore contain some of the richest lands in the country, but because they are not connected with the plains, they are not of much practical use to the people of the country. They were, for a long time, taken advantage of only by European planters, and it has been a standing complaint with several of us, who had some inkling into the state of affairs there, that the amount of public money spent in those inaccessible regions is out of all proportion to the benefits that this country—either the people or the Government—derives, in the shape of taxes, in the shape of wages, or in the shape of private income, from private property owned by the people of the State. But, anyhow, we have spent lakhs and lakhs of rupees there, if not crores. If these parts are linked up by good roads with the interior of the country, Travancoreans may take an increasing share in developing those tracts by the planting of tea, wheat, chillies, fruits and other things suited to local conditions. There is a big Company known as the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company which has opened up thousands and thousands of acres by planting tea. But the tea that is grown there is diverted to the port of Tuticorin and part of our tea duty is therefore going to the British Government. The tea planters there would gladly send their tea through Travancore territory to the Cochin port, if we give them better road facilities. Thus more of the customs duty realised from tea will come to us. If these roads are made, Travancoreans may not immediately rush up and start big enterprises. The existing financial stringency is a bar to all enterprises of the kind, but, as things improve, more and more people of this country will be availing themselves of the opportunity. Anyhow, our Government seem to have given a definite undertaking to the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company and we are bound to give effect to it. The Chief Engineer also assures us that these small stretches of road are absolutely necessary and the Director of Agriculture is also of the same opinion. Therefore, without weightier reasons than what have been placed before us, I think that it would be inadvisable for this House to stand in the way of these works being completed.

MR. K. ANANTANARAYANA AIYAR: Sir, I have one word to say in connection with the opening of roads. That roads are wanted has been a cry in the Popular Assembly for the past two decades nearly. Of course, if roads are opened, it is also necessary that they should be maintained in good order. The question, therefore, is, which road should be taken up first, so as to open up a large part of the country. We have already the question of opening the western outlet road. I believe reference was made by the Conservator to the sale of lands there. A portion of the tract adjoining the western outlet road was surveyed recently, and last year I sold about 350 acres for a sum of nearly

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[Mr. R. Dhanukoti Pillai.]

Rs. 40,000. The demand for lands for the colonisation of that part of the country was very great, and now another small block has been surveyed, and my successor in the Kottayam Division went for the auction. The auction had to be stopped, because there were no bidders; and one of the reasons for the paucity of the bidders was that the roads were not in good condition and that bridges were wanting there. The most important bridge in that part of the country is the Kuttampuzha bridge. As Mr. R. Dhanukoti Pillai observed, the timber contractor who had worked several coupes has got several thousands of cubic feet of timber, and he has not been able to remove it, simply because he has not been afforded the necessary facilities. The result is that the land has been sold and that the contractor has not been able to remove the timber. There is always a fight between the contractor on the one hand and the purchasers of land on the other. I am receiving several complaints and I have sent several communications to the Conservator on the subject. The House has to be enlightened on that point. I think that the construction of the Kuttampuzha bridge is very necessary.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Sir, when the question of the Kallar Scheme was under discussion, we heard a good deal to the effect that the lands about the region of the Kallar and generally in the High Range thereabout are absolutely useless and would not bring in anything in the shape of appreciable profit and so forth. Now, all on a sudden, when the question of this road has come up, every man seems to think that considerable possibilities are in store in the High Range, and seems to have a low opinion of the lowlands. Evidently, some of the gentlemen who were very enthusiastic in advocating the Kallar Scheme think that this House has but short memories. It is suggested by Mr. Krishna Aiyar that there is considerable prospect of even agriculture being developed in those parts, provided we grant this road. I would bring to the notice of the Council that wide and extensive tracts are available in Porakad *kari*, where agriculture may be attempted with better chance. It is quite accessible. We shall have to see whether there is the possibility of developing such lands here, before attempting to experiment with agriculture at considerable heights.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: May I know whether the member knows the distance between Kallar and Devicolam?

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: That does not matter at all for the purpose of the present discussion, since the High Range generally was held out as an unprofitable region during the Kallar debate.

PRESIDENT: That is no reply to Mr. Hoogewerf's question.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Because a reply is absolutely unnecessary.

MR. R. DHANUKOTI PILLAI: Mr. Narayana Pillai was referring to the fact that the catchment area of the Kallar river was absolutely of no use. As a matter of fact, if he would refer to the map here with

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me, he would find that the forest referred to is just outside the catchment area. Last time I pointed out that the report made by the late Conservator of Forests might have reference to the Tattakkad forest. But this forest is just beyond the catchment area and, as is now seen, it is one undulating grassy area and nothing else.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I was only addressing my remarks to the enthusiasts who maintain that the highlands as a whole have got considerable potentialities for a variety of purposes, if this particular road is opened.

PRESIDENT: Even in lowlands every inch of space cannot be useful.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I heard a lot of explanation, and possibly a lot of further explanation is also in the course of preparation. The general observations with regard to the fertility, etc., of the Kallar region are the subject-matter of my comment.

MR. K. ANANTANARAYANA AIYAR: Sir, Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai referred to the *kari* lands in the Ambalapuzha taluk. I simply want to submit that the matter is receiving the attention of Government and that they have already ordered a survey of the areas that could be given out for paddy cultivation.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: I brought forward the question of Porakad *kari* lands by way of contrast to the suggestion of agricultural development in the uplands. The motion before the House relates to a particular road. My friend, Mr. Anantanarayana Aiyar, tells the House that he is taking steps for the purpose of utilising those *kari* lands. But what is the sort of communication that is provided in that particular region? It may be said that water communication is possible. Except for the main canal we have not the necessary extent of water communication to open up the *kari* region or to promote its exploitation.

Turning to the comparative statement made by Mr. K. Parameswaran Pillai, in regard to the percentage of expenditure on roads, it appears that only 1 per cent. is being spent upon the Ambalapuzha taluk for roads. We are painfully in need of roads except perhaps in the Alleppey town. Then, with respect to the canals which are necessary for irrigation purposes, nobody seems to pay any attention. Some of the canals have been blocked up. When these questions are confronting the State, so far as the Ambalapuzha taluk is concerned, I would certainly oppose ideas, entirely distant, associated with the road in question, of fruit-bearing trees being reared, agriculture being developed, cardamom cultivation being stimulated and forests being tapped, all of which are far away on the horizon, considering the practical and pressing matters that have to be attended to.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, I think it is sheer waste of time to advance any argument for or against this item of Rs. 30,000 allotted for the Devicolam-Periakanal road, because, as has been pointed out, under an agreement we are bound to pay the money in seven instalments.

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[Mr. N. Padmanabha Pillai.]

As for the Kuttampuzha bridge, I am sure that the members of this House will agree that, if the bridge is to exist, it must have a platform. Otherwise, there is no use of its existence. I am sure that this consideration would weigh with my friend, Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai, before he divides this House on the motion. As regards the re-metalling of the Munnar-Devicolam road, I myself have not had the pleasure of seeing this place, but from what I have heard from persons who have seen it, I think that it might perhaps lie over for another year. So, I request you, Sir, to put to vote this item separately.

PRESIDENT: In regard to the Munnar-Devicolam road, I shall say a few words by way of explanation. The estimate was prepared chiefly at my instance, because I happened to go over that road more than a dozen times I find that the description of the work is given as 're-metalling.' Yesterday, unfortunately, a wrong entry in the budget led to very serious consequence. This again is a wrong description of the work. It is not mere re-metalling. It is making up the sides of the road chiefly. I found that the revetment had collapsed in two or three places and that it was going down. The difference between the level of the road and the bottom of the valley in those places is from 1,500 feet to 2,000 feet. It is unnecessary to point out to this House that, if in such places you neglect the road which runs on the brink of a precipice, you are only courting expenditure which will run to several thousands of rupees in a couple of years. The adage "A stitch in time saves nine" never applies more truly than to cases like this. If we spend a few thousand rupees now and make the road alright, we need not spend several thousands of rupees afterwards. It is a road very largely used and so it requires prompt attention.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Then I oppose the motion in its entirety.

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI: Sir, I also wish to associate myself with my friends who urged on the attention of this House that some principle should be observed in the distribution of State finance over the various taluks of the State. I represent one taluk on the coast line.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: I rise to a point of order. Are we discussing a policy?

PRESIDENT: We are not discussing a policy. We are discussing whether the particular amount in question should be voted or not.

MR. N. PADMANABHA PILLAI: I also point out that the amount spent on the taluk which I represent is very meagre, when compared to the revenue that it yields to the State. Several members on the official side brought to our notice that the roads about which we were talking now are very important. What we want to find out now is this. What is it that has actuated the Government in coming to an agreement with the Company? We are not aware of any other instances. Anyhow, it is not profitable, as was remarked by my friend, Mr. K. P. Raman Pillai, to speak about it

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While protesting that such kind of things cannot be tolerated, I myself think that there is not much use in arguing this question. I should like to advise my friend, Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai, to withdraw the motion.

MR. C. J. CURIEN: From what I learnt from the speeches already heard, the point that we have to decide is whether we are not bound to fulfil the contract which has been entered into with the Company. If I correctly understand, our Government during the last adminstration agreed to pay the amount of the contract in a lump sum. The Law Member seems to be of opinion that we are liable to pay the amount. Now we learn that the Government have succeeded in prevailing on the Company to agree to the amount being paid in seven instalments. Whether by instalments or in a lump sum, we are, no doubt, bound to pay the amount.

Then as regards the Kuttampuzha bridge, the Conservator just referred to one clause of the agreement and said that we have to repair the bridge, and give the necessary convenience to the contractor for the conveyance of timber. Under that clause it is explicit that we are bound to repair the bridge.

With regard to the Kumili-Devicolam road, I have to state that, though there is no road at the present time between Devicolam and Kumili, there is a trace by which people can go from, and come back to, Devicolam. I understand that murders committed in the Cardamom Hills are not detected on account of the absence of the road and on account of the location of the police station at a great distance. Taking the above circumstances into consideration, I am of opinion that it is highly necessary that the road in question should be repaired or re-metalled as suggested by my friend, Mr. Krishna Aiyar. I, therefore, oppose the motion.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, I wish to say a word regarding the manner in which demands for grants are discussed in this House.

I make particular reference to the matter now before the Council. We heard the gentlemen on the other side of the House, heads of departments and others, who are men of great experience, saying that the land about the Kallar catchment is not useful for the purpose of agriculture.

PRESIDENT: In the Kallar catchment and not about it.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: We heard the Director of Agriculture saying that the land is not fit for cultivation. I asked him a question as to whether he had seen the place and he was good enough to say that he had not.

DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI: I said I had been there, but did not go there for investigating the Kallar Scheme.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: That is substantially what I said. My friend did not go there with the purpose of seeing whether the

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[Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

land is useful for cultivation. At the best he might have taken a bird's eye-view of the High Range. The Conservator of Forests said that the land is not fit for cultivation. I am not quite sure whether the Conservator of Forests who is very well up in his own line is qualified to make a pronouncement about agriculture. The same set of facts is sometimes used by the official members now for this purpose and now for that. While the Government evinced a desire to give a concession to an engineering company, our experts were ready to stigmatise the Kallar valley as useless and unproductive. But, when the Chief Engineer comes forward with a proposal to open a road, the High Range becomes suddenly endowed with immense agricultural potentialities. On the other hand, I deplore that the gentlemen on this side—at least some of them—bring local matters before this House. This is not right. We do not want this House to be another Popular Assembly. With all respect to the patriotism and the sense of responsibility to their costituencies that the members possess, I would request them to distinctly remember that, whatever may be the difficulties from which particular taluks are suffering, we should not press them at the time when a grant of this nature is demanded by Government, because if each member stands up and claims preference in respect of his own taluk, we shall be going to the level of the Popular Assembly. The Popular Assembly has its own functions.

MR. JOSEPH PANJIKARAN: I rise to a point of order. We are not concerned with the Popular Assembly. We are only concerned with the allotment of money under a particular demand.

PRESIDENT: He is only expressing an opinion.

MR. JOSEPH PANJIKARAN: Such opinions should come from the chair. If the members begin to dictate to one another, it will be converted into a debate on a principle and not a vote for a demand.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: It is the right and duty of one and all to correct patent mistakes of this nature. No one possesses a monopoly of knowledge, and I shall be happy if my friend will be so good as to correct me when I am in the wrong. I think it is quite relevant to the discussion to point out that individual members should not come forward with the claims of particular localities, when a specific proposal for erecting public works in a particular locality is being discussed. I also represent a constituency and we have our own wants. But I shall not advert to them at this stage on the present occasion, because I fear I may be out of order.

PRESIDENT: You need not expatiate further on that point.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: The necessity for the road has been affirmed by several members, representing different interests and different shades of opinion. The Chief Engineer who has a good knowledge of local conditions is anxious to maintain his ground and the Dewan is prepared to endorse it as the result of his personal knowledge. Some of the members on this side agree in this view. I should be happy if Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai would withdraw his motion.

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RAO BAHADUR K. A. KRISHNA AIYANGAR: I believe that sufficient arguments have not been advanced to justify the present motion for the grant being vetoed. I would invite the attention of the Council to the fact that, after all, calculation per head of population would not necessarily be a correct test, and that, on the basis of that calculation, no conclusion could be drawn to enable us to judge whether a particular demand should be allowed or vetoed. If we go by area, the Devicolam taluk appears to be the biggest, covering 667·2 square miles, and close on its heels comes Peermade, while all the other taluks are comparatively very much smaller in area. If we go by the allotment for a square mile, I think that except three taluks all the other taluks are in advance of Devicolam. I think that none of these general principles ought to be called into requisition to determine whether any particular item under a demand ought to be allowed or not. The general question that a particular taluk is receiving extra consideration is one that appears to me not relevant to the purpose of the enquiry before us. I oppose the motion.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: Sir, in my opinion, the Chief Engineer has made out a good case. His case has been considerably strengthened by what has been said by the Conservator of Forests and the Director of Agriculture and it is also supported by the representatives of land-holders like Mr. Krishna Aiyar and Mr Dominic Tommun. In a case like this I think we are not in need of many arguments to oppose the motion just now discussed. Further, it has been explained by the Law Member what the position of the case is. There is already a legal obligation in respect of the K. D. H. P. Company and, if a suit is filed, the court will ask us to pay damages to the Company. Under these circumstances, though my sympathy is with Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai for a fairer distribution of funds for roads and communications, I have to oppose his motion.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I wish to say a word by way of reply. The proposition itself consists of three parts which have been clubbed together unfortunately and the arguments therefore have been more or less of a mixed nature. In the first place, in regard to the Devicolam-Periakanal road, it has been said that the matter is concluded by an agreement, and that, whether the Government are willing or not, they have to pay Rs. 30,000 to the K. D. H. P. Company, because they have undertaken to construct the road by borrowing money. If that is so, we have to pay the money. Apart from this, much has been said with respect to the need, nay, the absolute necessity, of the Devicolam-Kumili road. Well, Sir, I do not remember to have said anything to the effect that the road will not be of any use at all. As for that matter, I believe that not only that road, but all roads will be of some use or other. But the question before us is entirely a different one. Our position is something like that of an ordinary man sacrificing ordinary comforts for keeping a coach and pair. We are in need of several roads in places already inhabited by people and brought under cultivation. For the use

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[Mr. A. Govinda Menon.]

and development of these places several important public works are necessary, but all these are held up for want of funds. Under these circumstances, the question is, should the construction of the Devicolam-Kumili road be preferred to the other necessities of the country?

PRESIDENT: The discussion in regard to the Devicolam-Kumili road should be eschewed altogther. We are dealing with the Devicolam-Periakanal road.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: It appears to me that the Conservator of Forests, the Director of Agriculture and others were speaking with respect to the Devicolam-Kumili road.

PRESIDENT: That is based upon a remark made by you. You have probably forgotten it. You made a remark that the Devicolam-Kumili road is not a very useful one. It is in reply to that remark that some observations have been made by them.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: That is because in the budget itself the road is described as the Devicolam-Kumili road.

PRESIDENT: The Devicolam-Periakanal road which is now under discussion is part of that road. You yourself admit that that portion is covered by a contract and that the payment is obligatory. No other portion is now in question.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: So far as that portion is concerned, it is concluded by an agreement and we may leave it there. With regard to the road itself, the Conservator of Forests was saying that the land there contains very valuable timbers such as teak, etc. The Director of Agriculture was telling us that there are vast areas there fit for wheat, paddy and fruit cultivation,—all manner of cultivation. Well, Sir, I happen to know the place to some extent, though not as much as the Conservator or the Director of Agriculture. I have seen the whole place from Devicolam to Kumili. Most of it is either cardamom or merely grassy land which is unfit for any cultivation except perhaps tea cultivation.

PRESIDENT: The road need not follow the trace and will not follow the trace.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: At any rate there is no necessity shown for preferring this road to other roads which are absolutely necessary for the agriculturists on the plains. Now, as regards the other item, *i. e.*, the re-metalling of the Munnar-Devicolam road, I must confess that I am not satisfied as to the immediate necessity for it. However, in view of the fact that you say that you visited the place and are satisfied in regard to the urgent need for re-metalling that portion of the road, I do not press this motion to a division.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion 169.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Sir, I beg leave to amend my motion since a portion of it has already been discussed under motion 168.

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PRESIDENT: You may amend it.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Sir, my motion as amended will stand as follows:

169. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,25,915 for communications (original works) by Rs. 5,000. (Item 101—page vii of appendix B. of the budget estimate.)

So far as I am aware, the Adirapalli scheme has not matured, nor has any proper estimate been sent up or sanctioned by the Government. Unless the scheme takes a definite shape, I do not think there is necessity for spending any money in that connection. I, therefore, propose that that sum be reduced.

MR. R. EVERARD: Sir, as regards item No. 101, "opening a road from Malayattur to Adirapalli," I rise to oppose the motion. I may inform the House that the road is very necessary for the success of the Adirapalli irrigation scheme. The construction of this road is roughly estimated to cost between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 12,000. An expenditure of Rs. 3,880 has been incurred up to the end of Edavam last. The investigation of this road has been completed and the construction of the first section of it is in progress. We have now to adopt every possible means at our disposal to increase the output of food grains. This road is the first step in that direction. I hope the House will now see how important the construction of the road is. The provision of Rs. 5,000 made in the budget is to continue the work in 1098 to completion. The project would be a most paying one in addition to its throwing open about 2,200 acres to paddy cultivation. In view of these large and important considerations, I am unable to accept the motion.

The area commanded by the Adirapalli scheme is 2,200 acres with a possibility of another 2,000 acres in Angamali and another 10,000 acres in the Kodiyar valley.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: Will the member give us some more information as to the stage which the scheme has reached?

MR. R. EVERARD: An estimate has been prepared for the scheme including the road. This will cost one and a half lakhs of rupees. By the sale of land and timber we hope to realise one and three-fourths lakhs. The annual revenue will be Rs. 14,000. Besides all these, from the water of the Chalakudi river, we shall be able to develop 500 H. P. which could be used for generating electricity for working the Malayattur Saw Mill. The length of the road is only 6 miles, and the left and the right banks have been investigated.

MR. JOSEPH PANJIKARAN: The Chief Engineer was speaking of the scheme as being useful for irrigation purposes.

PRESIDENT: The proposal is to throw a dam across the Chalakudi river to divert the water of the river, and to irrigate the Adirapalli valley which in itself is 2,200 acres in area. The water could also be used for the irrigation of another 2,000 acres in the Angamali valley, and 10,000 acres elsewhere, in the Kodiyar valley.

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[Mr. A. Govinda Menon]

MR. R. DHANUKOTI PILLAI: Sir, as some of the members of the House appear to be not well-informed with regard to the Adirapalli scheme, may I be permitted to say a few words about it. The Chalakudi river which forms the boundary between Cochin and Travancore for some distance flows almost without any use to any one at present. The scheme is to throw a dam across this river at Adirapalli, and to divert a portion of the water to this side of Travancore. Half the water of this river belongs to Cochin and half to Travancore, and the dam is to have two vents of equal size, so that the Cochin half may flow down the river to the Cochin territory and the other half into Travancore. About 2,000 acres will be irrigated by this diversion and these lands consist now entirely of forests included within the rich Malayattur Reserve. When the Dewan inspected the place last time in company with the Dewan of Cochin, as Divisional Forest Officer, Northern Division, I had to put up a strong opposition to the disafforestation of this area. It was then decided that the Forest Department should remove the tree-growth from this area in the course of 3 or 4 years. I then pointed out to the Dewan that without a proper road this would be very difficult and we were not likely to get the best value for the timber growth. A sum of Rs. 5,000 was therefore provided in the P. W. D. budget for 1097, to carry out the preliminary investigation, and the road has now been aligned and an expenditure of Rs. 3,300 incurred so far. The total length of the road is about 12 miles and this will be the direct road to Adirapalli and will be of immense use when the dam work is undertaken. To improve this road and to put it in a condition to withstand the heavy timber traffic, an additional sum of Rs. 5,000 is required during 1098. Only when this road is opened, would it be possible to work down timber from the area and to disafforest expeditiously the 2,000 acres of land to be brought under cultivation.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Sir, according to the budget, there is no sum budgeted for this road.

PRESIDENT: It is a forest road.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: There is no amount budgeted here.

PRESIDENT: Perhaps, the final estimate is not yet ready. The work is being done in instalments.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: So far as the Adirappalli scheme is concerned, I know it better than many other members here, because I submitted a memorial some 12 years ago at the instance of the late Mr. Padmanabha Aiyar, who was the originator of the scheme. If the Government would assure us that the scheme would certainly come into force, I do not want to press the motion.

From what the Chief Engineer has said now, I understand that the estimate has been prepared for a sum of Rs. 1,50,000. Whether that estimate will be sufficient or not, we cannot say. But so far as I know, that estimate will never be sufficient.

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PRESIDENT: May I tell you that the Government are doing everything possible to further the scheme? It is a scheme which requires the sanction of both the Darbars,--not merely the Travancore Darbar, but also Cochin. We are going to dam up the river which devides, by half and half, the water to Cochin and Travancore. The matter is under correspondence between the Darbars and even if you spend half a dozen lakhs of rupees, it does not matter much, because it will irrigate a vast area here and enable you to realise the object. We are now informing the Cochin Darbar that we are entitled to one-half of this water and that Cochin cannot prevent us from enjoying the right we possess.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Before we make up our mind about that scheme finally, is it advisable to spend any money on that road?

PRESIDENT: It is required for the clearing away of the forest.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: In view of the explanation, I do not press my motion.

The motion was by leave, withdrawn.

The following motion was not made :

***Motion* 170.**

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI:

170. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 6,25,915 for communications (original works) by Rs. 25,000.

***Motion* 171.**

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion :

171. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 8,31,248 for maintenance or annual repairs (buildings and communications) by Rs. 1,00,000.

This is a time, I need hardly say, when a great deal of economy and retrenchment has to be effected. Even the Chief Engineer, I have no doubt, will admit that there is a very great amount of wastage in the matter of annual repairs and maintenance. With greater supervision, control and economy, I have no doubt that a great deal of this amount could be saved. At any rate, we are budgeting for a very small surplus, and it is necessary to make an experiment by reducing the allotment under this head and trying to meet our needs with the reduced amount. I hope that an experiment might be tried at least in 1098.

MR. R. EVERARD: Sir, I rise to oppose the motion with all the emphasis at my command. I am considerably surprised that a reduction of this kind should have been seriously moved in this House. Is it the intention of the mover or this House that the roads in Travancore should cease to be as good as they are now? Will such a deterioration in the condition of the roads be in the interests of the fast-developing motor traffic and the heavy timber traffic of this country? I hope it will not be necessary for me to draw the attention of the House to that ancient proverb " A stitch in time saves nine ". If the grant is reduced and the roads deteriorate in consequence, their restoration will be very much more costly, and this House will have to vote much larger supplementary grants that I may be forced to demand in that event. The House, I believe, knows that, although the cost of materials and labour has

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[Mr. R. Everard.]

increased, the maintenance grants for the roads are the same as those fixed years ago. The result is that it is found increasingly difficult to efficiently maintain the roads with the existing grants. If I did not demand larger grants for the communications which, I hope, the House will agree, I would be justified in demanding in view of the increase in the cost of materials and labour, it was only because, knowing the financial situation and the various demands on the revenues of the State, I did not wish to embarrass the Government. Under such circumstances, any reduction of the existing grants will produce disastrous results. If I remember correctly, some members complained in the course of the general discussion of the budget that more money was not allotted to new works under communications. I now feel glad that I did not provide more money. What is the good, I ask, in going on constructing new communications, when the House hesitates to provide adequate allotments even for the existing communications? We must first keep in good order the roads we have already got before we can think of new roads. If the House should insist on the reduction, I would have to advise the abandonment of our programme for new communications for the simple reason that, if the House is unwilling to allow the funds necessary to keep the existing roads in good order, it would be sheer waste of money to construct new ones, only to be allowed to deteriorate. It should be noted that the rise in the cost of labour and materials to the extent of nearly 30 per cent is in itself equal to a reduction of about Rs. two lakhs in the budget allotment. Of course, when local boards and municipalities in the future take over the maintenance of village roads and traces, there can be a corresponding reduction in the grant.

All that I have said above will, in the main, apply also to the annual repairs to buildings. It will, in my opinion, be a folly to allow the several buildings in the State to deteriorate, considering the large amount of money invested by Government on their construction. I may mention here that the grants allowed to the buildings are none too large. The buildings owned by Government are the assets of Government and it will not be sound policy to allow them to deteriorate. Of course, if the several departments take over the maintenance of their own buildings, the P. W. D. grant for the maintenance of buildings may be reduced, but this would swell the budget of those departments.

It is very easy to allow a road or building to go to ruins, but immensely difficult and costly to restore the same.

I have spoken at some length on this motion, for I consider that it has a far-reaching evil effect and I should warn this House to kindly bestow their earnest and full attention on the matter before it comes to a decision. Travancore roads have always had the best reputation and I would earnestly exhort this House to demonstrate their determination to maintain that reputation by voting against this motion. In the light of all that I have said, is it necessary for me to repeat once again that I strongly oppose the motion?

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MR. C. J. CURIEN: I will offer a few remarks in respect of the maintenance of buildings. Everybody knows that there are a number of Government buildings here, and that a large capital is being invested on these buildings. If my information is correct, it was during the time of Sir Seshiah Sastri that these buildings were given on rent, and I think that the amount fixed at that time was Rs. 50. I believe that amount is being collected even now from the officers who occupy the buildings. After that time they have spent a large amount of money in constructing buildings, and still the rent realised is the same as that fixed by Sir Seshiah Sastri.

I obtained information, some years ago, that the travellers' bungalow opposite the parade ground was once occupied by a Captain of the Nair Brigade. It was thatched annually at Government cost. Once, since the roof had fallen down to a great extent, and since the officer found it difficult to remain inside the building, especially in the hot sun at 12 o'clock, he complained to the Dewan that it had to be thatched. The Dewan asked him how much it would cost. He said: "About Rs. 50." From that day it was decided that such buildings should be rented out for Rs. 50 at least to meet the annual cost of their maintenance. But now the cost has increased. Still the rent is the same.

PRESIDENT: You cannot enhance the rates embodied in agreements.

MR. C. J. CURIEN: If the Government spend Rs. 2,000 for repair every year, they get a rent of only Rs. 100. I heard the Chief Engineer himself saying that for the maintenance of the Devicolam Travellers' Bungalow he spends Rs. 400, but that he gets an income of only Rs. 100. Government are losing a great deal by way of maintenance and repairs of these buildings. I, therefore, request the Government that such rent may be fixed as would meet at least the cost of maintenance and repairs incurred on account of these buildings.

I oppose the motion.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: The Chief Engineer seems to have based his opposition to the motion on the supposition that Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai was advocating that all the roads and public buildings in the State should be left to themselves without any annual maintenance. I am sure that that was not Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai's idea. Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai and all the other members of this House would be glad to vote as much money as the Chief Engineer wants. What Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai wants to impress upon the House is that we are not getting the money's worth out of the amount that we are spending for the maintenance of roads and buildings. He may have been in a position to give illustrations and examples from his own personal knowledge. But he refrained from doing so. He simply wanted to draw the attention of the House to a fact which is within the knowledge of one and all of us on this side. If, for example, a sum of Rs. 100 is allotted for the annual maintenance

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[Mr. S. Krishna Aiyar.]

of a certain item, our complaint is that we are not getting the full worth for that amount. If any of the members may be allowed to take up a contract for maintenance work, I suppose they may be able to do much greater work than at present.

PRESIDENT: May I tell you as a matter of information that I put this very suggestion to the members of the Popular Assembly—I think it was at the Assembly before the last—and I have not heard of any case in which local gentlemen have come forward to take up any contract for the maintenance of roads and buildings?

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: As we are allowed to go into details, let me assure the House that there are gentlemen who will be willing to take up such contracts, and in respect of a particular contract in my own taluk I shall myself procure a neighbour to take up the work. Then we shall be able to do the work much better and more cheaply. There may be people ready to undertake to do such works in other places also, but the fact is that they are not aware that such contracts are available to them. If it is publicly announced by the department that the people in any particular place will be allowed to take up contracts for maintaining the roads, canals and buildings near them in which they are interested, I believe that there will be a number of patriotic people ready to come forward and help the department. I know that in my locality there are people who are ready to come forward and undertake to do such works. I believe that all that Mr. Parameswaran Pillai wanted to point out was that the amount allotted for maintenance is not being properly spent and that we are not getting the worth of that money.

MR. T. KUMARA PILLAI: Sir, ഇഞ്ചിനീയർ മരാമത്തിലെ അറ്റകുറ്റവേലകളുടെ ചിലവിൽ ഒരു ഗണ്യമായ തുക കുറയ്ക്കണമെന്നുള്ള മിസ്റ്റർ ചങ്ങനാശേരി പരമേശ്വരൻപിള്ളയുടെ പ്രമേയത്തോട് എനിക്ക് യോജിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കാത്തതിൽ ഞാൻ സങ്കടപ്പെടുന്നു.

ഇഞ്ചിനീയർ മരാമത്തു പണികളിലുള്ള അറ്റകുറ്റവേലകളുടെ ചിലവു ന്യായമായ നിലയിൽ നടത്താതെ ഗവർണ്മെണ്ടിനു നഷ്ടവും ജനങ്ങൾക്കു പ്രയോജനമില്ലായ്മയും വരുന്ന സംഗതിയെ കൌൺസിൽ മുമ്പാകെ കൊണ്ടുവന്ന് ഒരു വാദവിഷയമാക്കണമെന്നുള്ള ഉദ്ദേശത്തോടുകൂടി മാത്രമേ അദ്ദേഹം ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ അവതരിപ്പിക്കാനിടയായിട്ടുള്ളൂ എന്നാണ് ഞാൻ അർത്ഥമാക്കുന്നത്. അങ്ങനെയാണെങ്കിൽ അത് ഏതുയോ സമയോചിതമായിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നാണ് തോന്നുന്നത്. എല്ലാ ശ്രീമൂലം പ്രജാസഭകളിലും വില്ലേജ് റോഡുകളുടെ അറ്റകുറ്റവേലകൾക്ക് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള തുപ്പാ അതിലേക്കു ചിലവാക്കി തീരുന്നില്ലെന്നുള്ള നിവേദനവിഷയങ്ങൾ ഒട്ടു പലരെക്കാണാവുന്നതാണ്. ഈ പ്രമാത്തം ഗവർണ്മെൻറിനും ഒരുവിധം ബോധ്യം വന്നിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നാണ് ഞങ്ങളുടെ വിശ്വാസം. എന്തായാലും വില്ലേജ് റോഡുകളുടെ അറ്റകുറ്റവേലകൾക്ക് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള തുപ്പാ അതിലേക്കുതന്നെ ചിലവാക്കിക്കാനുള്ള വ്യവസ്ഥകൾ ഒന്നുംതന്നെ ഇതുവരെയുണ്ടായിട്ടുള്ളതായി അറിഞ്ഞിട്ടില്ല. അറ്റകുറ്റവേലകൾക്കായി ആണ്ടുതോറും അനുവദിക്കുന്ന തുപ്പാ അതിലേക്കുതന്നെ ചിലവാക്കണമെങ്കിൽ ആ വേലകൾ നടത്തുന്നതിനായി നിശ്ചയിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള താൽക്കാലികശമ്പളക്കാരെ നിറുത്തി സ്ഥിരശമ്പളക്കാരെ നിയമിച്ചെങ്കിലല്ലാതെ അതു സാധിക്കുമെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. നൂതനവേലകളുടെ കണക്കിൽ ക്ലാസ് നം. 8-ം അറ്റക

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റവന്യൂ കളിൽ ക്ലർക്കന്മാർ വീതം താൽകാലികശമ്പളക്കാർക്കായി ഗവർണ്മെൻറ് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള സൌകര്യത്തേയും അധികാരത്തേയും അധികൃതന്മാർ ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തി വരുന്നത് ഇപ്പോൾ അതിരില്കവിഞ്ഞു പോയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഒരാൾക്ക് ഉദ്യോഗം കൊടുക്കണമെന്ന് തിരുവിതാംകൂർ ദിവാൻജി വിചാരിക്കുന്ന പക്ഷവും ഒഴിവുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ മാത്രമെ അതിലേക്ക സാധിക്കയുള്ളൂ. നേരെ മറിച്ച് ഇഞ്ചിനീയർ വകുപ്പിലെ ഒരു സെക്ഷണാഫീസർ വിചാരിക്കുന്നപക്ഷം ഉടനെ തന്നെ പത്തോ പതിനഞ്ചോ രൂപാ ശമ്പളത്തിൽ ഒരു മേസ്തിരി വേലകൊടുക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നതാണ്. ഇഞ്ചിനീയർ വകുപ്പിലെ പലെ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരുടേയും വീടുകളിൽ ജോലികഠം ചെയ്യാനായി ഓരോവേലകളിൽ ചുമത്തീട്ടുള്ള താൽകാലിക ശമ്പളക്കാരെ കാണുവാനുണ്ട്. അതുപോലെതന്നെ പലേ ആഫീസുകളിലും മേസ്തിരിപണിയിലുള്ള പലരേയും ആഫീസുസിൽബന്ധികളെ സഹായിക്കുന്നതിനു വച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതായി കാണുവാനുണ്ട്. ഇങ്ങനെ നാനാവിധമായ ചിലവുകളും കൺട്രാക്ടറന്മാരുടെ ലാഭവും കഴിച്ചു നോക്കുന്നതായാൽ ഓരോവേലകഠംക്കും അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള അടങ്കൽ തുകകളിൽ ക്ലർക്കന്മാർ വീതം ചിലവാക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുമോ എന്നുള്ളത് സംശയമായിതീർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ വിധമുള്ള ചിലവുകളെ തടുക്കുന്നതിനു ചീഫ് ഇഞ്ചിനീയരും, അക്കൌണ്ടാഫീസറും, വേണ്ടപോലെ ശ്രമിച്ചിട്ടും ഇതുവരെ സാധിക്കാനിടയായിട്ടില്ല. ഓരോ വേലകളിൽ ചുമത്തി താൽകാലിക ശമ്പളക്കാരെ വച്ചു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന കാലത്തോളം അതു സാധിക്കുമെന്നും തോന്നുന്നില്ല. ജോലികഠം നടത്തുന്നതിനു താൽകാലശമ്പളക്കാരായ മേസ്തിരിമാരേയും വാച്ചറന്മാരേയും നിയമിക്കുന്ന ഏർപ്പാട് നിറുത്തി അതിനു പകരം സ്ഥിരശമ്പളക്കാരെ നിയമിച്ചുവെല്ലാതെ അക്രമമായ ഈ അഴിമതിച്ചിലവുകഠം നിൽക്കുമെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല.

മറെറാരു സംഗതി എനിക്ക പറയാനുള്ളതു സർക്കാർ കെട്ടിടങ്ങളുടെ അറകൂറവേലകഠംക്ക ചിലവാക്കി വരുന്ന രീതിയേയും അതിലേക്കുകിട്ടിവരുന്ന വാടകയേയും പറ്റിയാണ്. പലേ സർക്കാർ കെട്ടിടങ്ങഠംക്കും കിട്ടിവരുന്ന വാടകയിൽ എത്രയോ കുടുതലായിട്ടാണ് അറകൂറവേലകഠംക്കുപണം ചിലവാക്കി വരുന്നത് എന്നാണ് അറിയുന്നത്. ഇങ്ങനെ പൊതുമുതലിൽ നിന്നു ചെയ്തു വരുന്ന ദുർവ്യയത്തെ നിറുത്തേണ്ട കാലം അതിക്രമിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. കെട്ടിടത്തിനും സ്ഥലത്തിനും ഇപ്പോൾ പിടിക്കുംവിധ കണക്കാക്കി അതിലേക്ക ന്യായമായ ഒരു പലിശ കിട്ടത്തക്കവണ്ണം വാടക നിശ്ചയിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

റോഡുകളുടെ അറകൂറവേലകഠംക്ക് അതാതു സ്ഥലത്തുള്ളവർക്ക് കരാർ കൊടുക്കുന്നതു നന്നായിരിക്കുമെന്നുള്ള മിസ്റ്റർ കൃഷ്ണയ്യരുടെ അഭിപ്രായത്തോടു ഞാൻ യോജിക്കുന്നു.

ഈ ഏർപ്പാടിന് അധികൃതന്മാർ പലെ പ്രതിബന്ധങ്ങളും ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നു. അതിനു ഒന്നാമതായി എന്റെ വീട്ടിനു സമീപമുള്ള റോഡിനെ പലെ അവസരങ്ങളിലും എന്റെ കൈയിൽ നിന്നു പണം ചിലവാക്കി നന്നാക്കിക്കാറുണ്ട്. അതിന്റെ അറകൂറവേലകഠംക്ക് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള തുക എനിക്കു കിട്ടുന്നപക്ഷം റോഡിനെ നന്നാക്കി നല്ലസ്ഥിതിയിൽ വച്ചു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കാമെന്നുള്ള ഉദ്ദേശത്തോടു കൂടി സബ്ഡിവിഷൻ ആഫിസരോടു ഞാൻ അപേക്ഷിച്ചു. അതിന്റെ ഫലമായി ആ റോഡിൽ ചെയ്യേണ്ട വേലകളെ വിവരിച്ച് ഒരു ഉടമ്പടി തയ്യാറാക്കി ഒപ്പിടാനായി സെക്ഷണാഫീസർ എനിക്ക് അയച്ചു തന്നു. ആ ഉടമ്പടിപ്രകാരം വേലനടത്തുന്നതിന് ആ റോഡിലേക്ക് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള തുകയിൽ നിന്നു പത്തുമടങ്ങു കുടി ചിലവാക്കിയാലും സാധിക്കാത്തതുകൊണ്ട് അതിലേക്കുള്ള എന്റെ ശ്രമത്തെ ഉപേക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടതായി വന്നു. ഓരോ സ്ഥലത്തിലെയും വില്ലേജ് റോഡുകളുടെ അറകൂറവേലകഠം നടത്തുന്നതിന് അതാതു സ്ഥലത്തെ മാന്യന്മാരിൽ ആർക്കെങ്കിലും Lump sum contract കൊടുക്കയും അധികൃതന്മാർ അവരോടു ബഹുമാനമായി പെരുമാറുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നപക്ഷം വില്ലേജ് റോഡുകളുടെ ഇന്നത്തെ പരിതാപകരമായ സ്ഥിതിക്ക് എത്രയോ കുറവു വരുമെന്നുള്ളതാണ്.

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[Mr. C. P. Kochukunju Pillai.]

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: As has been rightly observed by my friends, Mr. Krishna Aiyar and Mr. Kumara Pillai, it is not contended on this side of the House that the amount under maintenance allotment should be reduced. The only point is that there is considerable leakage of money going on under this item through the lower subordinates of the department. It is really unfortunate that, in spite of the existence of a string of officers in the department as Supervisors, Assistant Engineers and Executive Engineers, we do not get our money's worth out of the allotment under this head. You, Sir, observed that the contract for the works will be given over to the local people. As for that, I should think that it is not a matter which would be encouraged by departmental subordinates. It may not be to their interest to advertise these works and to see people come forward to take them up.

In regard to this, the authorities concerned should see that the matter is properly administered. I am sure local efforts will not be wanting and local people will certainly come forward and it will certainly be an advantage if only a serious attempt is made by the department in that direction.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: Sir, I fully endorse the views expressed by my friends on this side. If the officers concerned had approached the people in the neighbourhood, they would have got better customers in the matter of contracts for these works. I also fully agree with my friends in saying that there is leakage as well as wastage in the matter of maintenance. In fact, it has become a notorious phenomenon throughout the country. Much depends upon the executive officers who supervise the works. If I may be permitted, I would say that, when Mr. Natesa Aiyar was the Executive Engineer at Kottayam, he was able to do much useful work in that direction, with the co-operation of the men in the neighbourhood. If officers adopt a policy like that, I am sure we can save much money to the advantage of the people at large.

MR. C. P. KOCHUKUNJU PILLAI: Sir, I prefectly agree with my friend, Mr. Krishna Aiyar. As regards the maintenance of public roads and village roads, I may bring to the notice of the Council one instance. Village roads generally branch off from public roads. Of course, P. W. D. officers generally travel only along public roads. The maintenance work in the village roads is generally done for the first 100 or 200 yards beginning from the public road and the work ends there. Nobody takes the trouble of going beyond that portion of the road for inspection. I have suggested to some officers that the money allotted for these village roads, which in some cases comes to one or two thousand rupees, may be usefully spent on one village road in one year and on another road in the next year. I am sorry, Sir, that these officers have not been listening to my suggestion. However, I find that there is a general complaint that village roads are not being maintained by actually spending the money allotted for the same.

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Now, as regards the question referred to by the President, namely whether local people will be coming forward to take up the contracts of these maintenance works, I may say that some officers are making enquiries as to whether such persons are available. But I submit that they make enquiries of persons who are in a position to adjust themselves with them and not of persons who may spend the whole money upon the work. What I want to impress upon the House is that the money actually allotted for the purpose of maintenance of public roads and village roads is not spent and it is not a difficult thing to obtain evidence for this.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Sir, I have already made a suggestion as to repairs to roads, whereby a big saving may be effected. I see the annual repairs to roads being carried on during all parts of the year and work being rushed through at the end of the year to prevent funds lapsing. When repairs are done during dry weather, water has to be drawn, and this means unnecessary expense. Is it not possible to fix some time, say towards the close of the monsoon, which will help in the better consolidation of roads and save the drawing of water? I only offer these suggestions from the layman's point of view, and they may be taken for what they are worth.

I want to speak of a more important matter than repairs to roads. I refer to the Alleppey Commercial Canal. I hope, Sir, I am in order.

PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: It was I who recommended some improvements to be made to the Alleppey Commercial Canal, when I was Port Officer and President of the Town Improvement Committee there. The improvements suggested by me could all have been effected with a comparatively small amount, and that in one or two years' time, and these improvements would have served all purposes. The Canal had both public and private landing ghats and every other convenience for loading and unloading goods, except that the P. W. D. grossly neglected its up-keep, and allowed it to go into a state of disruption. To say that the present improvements are necessary because the canal was in a state of disrepair is begging the question. About 10 years ago, the works were started, and we have come only about half way, after spending, probably, about 5 or 6 lakhs of rupees over the improvements. There are six sections, and only 2½ sections have been completed till now. Probably, after all is said and done, it may cost about Rs. 15 lakhs, and six or seven years more for the works to be completed. A toe-path on each side of the canal with turf or stone-packing on the banks would have been ample, and will, I think, still be ample for the remaining portion of the canal. It is only one who has a personal knowledge of the traffic in the canal that can understand the great obstruction caused to it by the canal being blocked up for years together in certain portions for effecting improvements, and by other portions being left unattended to on the plea of future improvements to be effected to them. I beg to submit that it is sinful waste of public funds to throw them away on works of

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[Mr. M. R. Madhava Variar.]

this kind, when every rupee has to be saved and used to meet the real and urgent needs of the country. With regard to P. W. D. contracts, I beg to say that, when I was the President of the Alleppey Town Improvement Committee, a recommendation was made to Government on the suggestion of Mr. Rajagopalachari who was the Dewan then, that the Committee be put in charge of the roads and canals and that the annual repairs be made over to us. The matter was referred to the Chief Engineer who vetoed the proposal and said that "all these repairs should be attended to by the department."

In this connection, I would wish to say a word about the rice supply contract.

PRESIDENT: You are not in order.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: A good deal of waste is incurred on account of maintenance of roads and the money spent is not usefully spent at all. If the amount allotted for the maintenance of roads had been really and usefully spent for the purpose, many of our village roads would long ago have emerged out of their present deplorable condition and have become very good roads instead. I would cite as an instance the village road from Vaikam to Vechur, a distance of about six miles from Vaikam. It is a long-standing complaint of the people of Vechur and the Popular Assembly members that there is no good road from Vaikam to Vechur and thence to Kottayam, and yet this villiage road on which a good amount of money is supposed to be spent every year is exactly in the same condition as it was several years ago. If the money annually allowed for the purpose of maintaining this road had been properly spent upon it, there would have been an end of this complaint long ago. I hope the scheme proposed by Government in respect of the maintenance of roads will be put into practice as early as possible.

In regard to buildings, especially those in Trivandrum, it is desirable to insist upon getting higher rents from the occupants, so that we may get at least the interest on the amount annually spent upon these repairs.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: Sir, I agree with my friends on this side that there is considerable wastage of public money under maintenance and repairs. My house is in a village. I have walked along miles of village roads and P. W. traces. But I have never witnessed any P. W. D. officer anywhere there. The P. W. D. never spend any money on village roads and P. W. traces. Once in two or three years, a cooly may appear on the road with a spade and make one or two cuts here and there and make the road worse in the rainy season. That is the only work done by the P. W. D. At least, I can say that, so far as my constituency is concerned. For 1098 a sum of Rs. 50,000 is provided under maintenance of village roads. I can say without fear of contradiction that the major portion of this amount is diverted for some other purpose or that it mysteriously disappears. Certainly, it will not be used for the purpose which it is intended.

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Then with regard to the estimates, I fear that the contractors never spend as much money as is estimated. If a building is to be white-washed in two or three coats, generally they do it only in one coat. Similarly, there is the wastage of money on repairs to communications. If the Chief Engineer would exercise vigilant control and supervision, he can certainly reduce the allotted expenditure under this head.

MR. TRIVIKRAMAR VASUDEVAR: SIR, സംസ്ഥാനത്തിലെ റോഡുകളുടെ അറ്റകുറ്റപ്പണികൾക്കായി ആണ്ടോടാണ്ട് അനുവദിക്കാറുള്ള സംഖ്യ ആ വിഷയത്തിൽ ചിലവുചെയ്യപ്പെടുന്നില്ലെന്ന് എനിക്കറിവാനിടവന്നിട്ടുണ്ട്. അടുത്തകാലത്ത് ഞാൻ ഉത്തരതിരുവിതാംകൂറിലേയ്ക്കു പോയിരുന്നപ്പോൾ പലറോഡുകളിലും വണ്ടിയിൽ പോകാൻ നിവൃത്തിയില്ലാതിരുന്നതിനാൽ കാൽനടയായി പോകേണ്ടിവന്നു. അറ്റകുറ്റപ്പണികൾക്കായി പ്രതിവർഷം അനുവദിക്കാറുള്ള തുക വേണ്ടപോലെ ചിലവു ചെയ്തിരുന്നാൽ ഈ റോഡുകൾ ഇങ്ങനെ അനാഥസ്ഥിതിയിൽ കിടക്കുകയില്ലായിരുന്നു. ഈവകയ്ക്കായി അനുവദിക്കുന്നപണം വേണ്ടപോലെ ചിലവുചെയ്യാറില്ലെന്നാണ് സമീപസ്ഥന്മാരും തദ്ദേശനിവാസികളും പറയുന്നതു്. പലദിക്കുകളിൽ ഈ സംഗതിയെപ്പറ്റി അനേകംപേർ എന്നോടു നേരിട്ടു സംസാരിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. അവരുടെ പേരുകളെടുത്തു പ്രസ്താവിക്കുന്നതു് അവർക്ക് ഉപദ്രവകരമായേക്കുമെന്നുകരുതി അങ്ങനെചെയ്യുന്നില്ല. പ്രതിവർഷം റോഡുനന്നാക്കുന്നതിനായി അനുവദിക്കാറുള്ള തുകയിൽ മുക്കാൽഭാഗമോ മുഴുവനോ ആയ ഒരംശമാത്രം ആ ഇനത്തിലേക്കുചിലവുചെയ്യുകയും ബാക്കി അപഹരിക്കുകയുമാണ് നടപ്പു് എന്നാണ് ഞാൻകേട്ടതു്. മേലുദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർ ഈ സംഗതികളിൽ വേണ്ടപോലെ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കയോ വിക്രിയകൾ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തുകയോ പരിശോധനനടത്തുകയോ ചെയ്യുക ചുരുക്കമാണു്. ഈ നിലയ്ക്കു റോഡുകളുടെ സംരക്ഷണത്തിനായി പൊതുമരാമത്തിൽനിന്ന് ആണ്ടോടാണ്ട് അനുവദിക്കാറുള്ള വലിയതുക മുഴുവൻ യഥാസ്ഥാനം ചിലവിടുന്നതിനു വേണ്ട നിഷ്കർഷചെയ്യേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. അല്ലാത്തപക്ഷം ഈ ഇനത്തിലേയ്ക്കനുവദിക്കുന്നതുക വളരെ കുറയ്ക്കുകയാണ് നന്നു്. അങ്ങനെയും ഇപ്പോൾ കുറവു ചെയ്യുന്നതു് മാവിയിൽ വളരെ അസൗകര്യത്തിനും ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടിനും ഇടയാക്കുമെന്നുള്ളതിനാൽ, ഈ വകയ്ക്കു കൊല്ലം തോറും അനുവദിക്കുന്ന സംഖ്യ വാസ്തവത്തിൽ ഉപയോഗപ്രദമാംവണ്ണം വ്യയം ചെയ്യുന്നതിനു വേണ്ട ഏർപ്പാടുകൾ കഴിയുന്നത്രയുംവേഗത്തിൽ ചെയ്യേണ്ടതു് അത്യാവശ്യമാണു്.

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN: പബ്ലിക്കുവക്ക്സ് ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിൽനിന്നു മെയിൻറിനൻസ്വകയ്ക്കു വലിയ ഒരുസംഖ്യ ചിലവുചെയ്യാൻ ബഡ്ജറ്റിൽ മുതൽകണക്കിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. എന്നാൽ ഇതിൽ എത്രയും അത്യാവശ്യമായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലല്ല വേലകളെ കൊള്ളിച്ചിട്ടേയില്ല. കോട്ടയത്തിനു വടക്കോട്ടു മെയിൻറോഡുതന്നെ സഞ്ചാരയോഗ്യമല്ലാത്തവണ്ണം വഷ്കാലങ്ങളിൽ ചളിമയമായി തീരുകയാണ് പതിവു. വഷ്കാലം ആരംഭിച്ചാൽ മൂവാറ്റുപുഴ, തൊടുപുഴ മുതലായ താലൂക്കുകളിൽ എന്തുതന്നെ സംഭവിച്ചാലും ജനങ്ങളേ എത്രയെല്ലാം കമ്പികളും കൊടുക്കുകയൊ സങ്കടങ്ങളും അറിയിക്കുകയൊ ചെയ്താലും ഓരോ ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിലേയും വലിയ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാർ ആരും അങ്ങോട്ടു കാറിൽ ഉടനെ വന്നെത്തുമെന്നു കീഴുദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരെ ജനങ്ങളെ പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കേണ്ടതില്ല. വഷ്കാലങ്ങളിൽ ആങ്ങോട്ടുവരാതെയിരിക്കുന്നതു വളരെ ബുദ്ധിപൂർവ്വമാണു്. എന്തെന്നാൽ യാത്രചെയ്യുന്ന ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥൻറെ കാറും ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥനും മിക്കവാറും ചളിയിൽ പുതഞ്ഞുപോകുന്നതുവണ്ണം അത്ര ആഴമേറിയ ചളിമയമായ കഴികൾ റോഡുകളിൽധാരാളമുണ്ടു്. അങ്ങനെമോട്ടാർ സർവ്വീസ് ഏർപ്പെടുത്തിട്ടു നിരത്തിക്കാണുന്നതു മെയിൻറോഡിൻറെ ശോച്യാവസ്ഥകൊണ്ടാണെന്നു ഗവർണ്മെൻറിന് അറിയാമല്ലോ. ചില ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ കുന്നുകളുടെ താഴ്വരകളിൽക്കൂടി മാറിയിട്ടും ചളിമയമായ പ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ മെറ്റൽ ഇട്ടുറപ്പിച്ചും മെ

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[Mr. N. Kumaran.]

യിൻറോഡു മോട്ടോർ വാഹനങ്ങൾക്കു സഞ്ചാരയോഗ്യമാക്കിത്തീർക്കുന്നതിനു ബഡ്ജറിൽ സംഖ്യകൾ കാണിച്ചിട്ടില്ല. കാലൽവഴി പോട്ടകൾ സദാ സഞ്ചരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. കായലോരത്തുള്ള താലൂക്കുകൾക്കു ജലമാർഗ്ഗമായ യാത്രാസൌകര്യം സുലഭമെന്നിരിക്കിലും കോട്ടയത്തുനിന്നും കൊല്ലത്തുകൂടി എറണാകുളത്തിനു കായലോരത്തിനടുത്തുകിടക്കുന്ന റോഡു ബസ്സുപോകത്തക്കവണ്ണം ഗവർമ്മെൻറ് സംരക്ഷിച്ചുവരുന്നുണ്ട്. മല്ലപ്പള്ളിതിരുവിതാംകൂറിലേയും തെക്കൻതിരുവിതാംകൂറിലേയും സ്ഥിതി പ്രത്യേകം പറയേണ്ടതുമില്ല. അവിടെയെല്ലാം ധാരാളം ബസ്സുകളും കാറുകളും സഞ്ചരിക്കത്തക്കവണ്ണം വഴികൾ സുരക്ഷിതങ്ങളാണ്. മൂവാറ്റുപുഴ, കോട്ടപുഴ മുതലായ താലൂക്ക നിവാസികൾക്കു പുറത്തുപോകുന്നതിനു മെയിൻറോഡല്ലാതെ ജലമാർഗ്ഗമായോ മറേറാ യാതൊരു സൌകര്യങ്ങളും ഇല്ലാതിരുന്നിട്ടും മെയിൻറോഡിനെ മോട്ടോർവാഹനങ്ങൾ പോകത്തക്കവിധം സുരക്ഷിതമാക്കിവയ്ക്കുവാൻ വിചാരിക്കാത്തതു കഷ്ടംതന്നെ. ധാരാളം പുതിയറോഡുകൾ രാജ്യത്തിൻറെ ഉദ്യോഗങ്ങളിൽ വെട്ടേണ്ടതു് അത്യാവശ്യമാണെന്ന് ഓരോ താലൂക്ക പ്രതിനിധികളും പ്രജാസഭവഴിയായും മറ്റും വാദിച്ചിരുന്നിട്ടും അതുകളെ മിക്കവാറും എല്ലാംതന്നെ വിട്ടിരിക്കുന്നതായി കാണുന്നു. കോതമംഗലത്തുനിന്നും വാഴക്കുളത്തേക്ക്, മൂവാറ്റുപുഴത്താപ്പിക്കിലെ ആശ്രേയം പബ്ലിക്ക റോഡില്ലാത്തതായതുനാലല്ലോ, വാരപ്പെട്ടിഇരണ്ടുപ്രകൃതികളുടെ മദ്ധ്യേകൂടി പത്തുമയിൽനീളമുള്ള ഒരു റോഡു വെട്ടിക്കണമെന്ന പ്രജാസഭയുടെ ആരംഭകാലംമുതൽക്കുതന്നെ മൂവാറ്റുപുഴയിലേയും, തൊടുപുഴയിലേയും പ്രജാസഭാമെമ്പർമാർ പലവർഷവും വാദിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്. നാലുവർഷംമുമ്പേ സർവ്വെചെയ്യുന്നതിനു ഗവർൺമെൻറ് അനുവദിക്കുകയും സർവ്വെ ചെയ്യുകയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഇക്കൊല്ലത്തെ ബഡ്ജറിൽ ആയതു വെട്ടുന്നതിനു സംഖ്യ അനുവദിച്ചുകാണുന്നില്ല. അറ്റകുറ്റവേലകളെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് എന്നപോലെതന്നെ പുത്തൻ റോഡുകളുടെ കാര്യത്തിലും ജനങ്ങൾക്ക് ഏറ്റവും അത്യാവശ്യമായുള്ളവയെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു നടപ്പിൽവരുത്തുന്നതിൽ ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിൻറെ ശ്രദ്ധപതിഞ്ഞുകാണുന്നില്ല. വില്ലേജുറോഡുകൾ മിക്കവാറും ചളിമയമായി കിടക്കയാണ്. അങ്ങിനെയുള്ള ഒരു റോഡിൽ നിരത്തുന്നതിനായി ശേഖരിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള മെറൽ സക്കീട്ടിൽ പ്രസിദ്ധമാണ്. അവർകളെത്തന്നെ ഞാൻ ഒരിക്കൽ കാണിച്ചു കൊടുത്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. കേവലം മണ്ണിനുതുല്യമായ ചാമപ്പൊടിയൻകല്ലാണ് മെറലായി ശേഖരിച്ചിരുന്നത്. ഇങ്ങിനെ കാണിച്ചുകൊടുത്തതുകൊണ്ടോ എന്തോ ഇതുവരെ ആ മെറൽ വിരിച്ചിട്ടില്ല.

Mr. N. KUMARAN; Sir, there is a good deal of force in the contention that these roads are not maintained properly. The money allotted for them is not spent on them and the buildings are not properly repaired. It is a matter of common knowledge that towards the close of every year the maintenance of roads is taken up in hand by the department and vigorously pushed through. Even to-day, I have seen a number of roads in Trivandrum where the work is going on vigorously. If you examine the nature of the work that is done, you will find that it is not for the purpose of repairing the road, but for the purpose of saving the money from lapsing, that these repairs are being done. In the matter of repairs of buildings also, there is this difficulty. We find that such repairs are given to contractors and in most places this is monopolised by one or two persons. Owing to the absence of competition we find that they charge more, and even if the roads are inspected, they do not spend the whole money, and, as a consequence, a large portion of it goes into the pockets of the contractors. That is the reason why I say that a good portion of the money allotted for

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the repairs is not spent, and that is the reason why this motion has been brought forward by Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai. If proper supervision were exercised, if the head of the department could only go into the matter most carefully, it would be possible to save not only one lakh but much more and at the same time it would not be impossible to effect all the repairs that he wants. I, therefore, support the motion.

MR. JOSEPH PANJIKARAN: Sir, the question before the House is whether the allotment under maintenance cannot be reduced and all the members on this side have spoken on the subject. They have all repeatedly said that there is a good amount of waste in the matter of the money that is yearly allotted for maintenance works. That goes to show that a smaller amount than what is allotted will certainly suffice for the work that is intended. The principle that roads and buildings once put up are to be maintained is certainly supported by every member. But the question is whether Rs. 8 lakhs is actually necessary. That is the question before the House. There is no dispute on that point. Considering the amount of leakage under this item, the question we have to consider is whether the reduction moved for cannot be voted for. I think that in these days, when our financial condition is so poor, we can very easily deduct a good portion from the amount asked for under the head of maintenance, about which so much has been said by the various representatives. So I support the motion.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Sir, Mr. Panjikaran has spoken about leakage. I beg to know whether a reduction of Rs. 1 lakh would prevent this leakage.

MR. JOSEPH PANJIKARAN: Certainly not. Now that the leakage has been brought to notice, it is to be hoped that the authorities concerned will be more strict over their subordinates in the matter of leakage. It is not by deducting the amount that we can prevent leakage; but by doing so we can make the authorities know that they cannot afford to have so much leakage, as they were perhaps unconsciously allowing in the past. I support the motion brought forward by Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai, not because I do not want roads to be maintained and buildings to be repaired, but I believe sincerely that the whole money that is annually allotted is not actually spent on maintenance and repairs.

MR. K. C. RAJA RAJA VARMA: Sir, I cannot fully agree with Mr. K. Paramesvaran Pillai. He really thinks that the allotment made for the annual maintenance and repairs of roads and buildings is too much and that one lakh may be safely deducted from the allotment. Even as matters stand at present, the annual maintenance and repairs attended to, either by the department or by the contractors, are in a most unsatisfactory condition. Many roads, especially village roads, and in some cases, main roads also, are not attended to annually either by the department or by the contractors, even though the necessary provision has been made in the budget. I, therefore, think that it is not advisable to press the motion for a reduction. But I would request the

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[Mr. K. C. Mammen Mappillai.]

department to pay more attention to the work of maintenance and repairs.

MR. K. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, in moving this motion, nothing was further from my intention than to say that anything should be taken out of what may be absolutely necessary to maintain properly our public buildings and roads. On the other hand, it was my intention to impress upon the Government the need for proper attention being paid to the maintenance of public works. But I contend, in the first place, that, although a large amount of money is allotted for annual repairs, our roads and buildings are not maintained in a proper condition.

My second point is that there is a good deal of wastage and leakage in this matter and that by proper economy a large amount of money may be saved. For the maintenance of these roads and buildings in their present condition I do not think that even 50 per cent. of the allotment is necessary. Of course, it is within the knowledge and experience of the members of this Council that, so far as annual maintenance is concerned, there is a good deal of fraud and there is great room for improvement. I shall mention one instance which came to my notice the other day. The other day I was speaking to a friend of mine about a P. W. D. contractor who made a large amount of money out of contract works. This contractor had a son who squandered a large portion of his wealth, and, as this boy was an old student of mine, I enquired of my friend how this boy happened to waste what his father had acquired. My friend turned round and told me: "Well, Sir, if you knew how this money was made, you would not be surprised at the result." The fact was that this man had taken up the contract for dredging the Chavara Canal. It would appear that he would keep the measuring officer engaged till the flow tide came in and then have his work measured. Thus he managed to hoodwink the officers and made a lot of profit. My friend was, therefore, not at all surprised at the fate that followed his ill-gotten wealth. If we speak of individual experience, there is no end of it. All that I can say is that there is a good deal of leakage in the allotment for maintenance works and that it should be the endeavour of the Government to check it as much as possible. With these few words, I withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

***Motion* 172.**

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI: Sir, I beg to make the following motion:

172. "To reduce the allotment of Rs. 21,90,835 for "Executive" by Rs. 1,000.

My object in bringing this motion is to make a few general observations. There has been a great deal of wrankling about the distribution of funds for public works. I would urge the advisability of making a thorough investigation of the whole subject, and making a plan for several years ahead, arranged in the order of urgency and importance

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of each work, so that they may be taken up one by one for execution according as funds become available.

With regard to the existing works, roads and canals—

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Sir, I rise to a point of order. I do not know whether we are dealing with roads and canals or with the executive.

PRESIDENT: We are dealing with everything in regard to public works.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: We are dealing with the executive.

PRESIDENT: All works come under this item. It is the total expenditure that is covered by the allotment.

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: I beg your pardon.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI: If the existing canals and roads can be classified according to their importance, it ought to be the exclusive duty of Government to construct and maintain all such works in the first category like the main central road which possesses national importance. For works in the second, third and subsequent categories a sliding scale of funds should be provided from the general revenues and the local and particular interests should be asked to find the balance. If such an arrangement for the distribution of funds could be made, the rankling about the distribution of, and the insatiable clamour for, public funds could be minimised.

The only way by which Government could meet these demands is to allow the people to decide such matters in consultation or in combination with the officers of Government and to devise some general plans by which the funds of the Public Works Department may be equitably distributed. I think, in England, some such plan was made and certain funds were ear-marked and placed at the disposal of a road board, to be distributed according to the general principle to which I have been referring. Another point I wish to mention is that there is a feeling that too much money is consumed in buildings—much more money than the country could afford or than is really necessary—and that more funds ought to have been devoted to roads and communications not only in the capital, but throughout the country. The other day I mentioned an instance of an out-of-the-way building, somewhere on the western side of Alwaye, costing a lot of money, built at the instance of the Forest Department, and, as I mentioned now, used by a forest guard. I am not able to give the exact details. The main building was left unused, except once in a year or two, when it might be used by some officer passing that way. Similarly, some works get started, and nobody seems to be able to stop the progress of their construction. At the same time, some other works, however urgent they may be, do not get started. There seems to be some mysterious force at work, and somebody is getting more than what he deserves. It is the duty of Government to see that this kind of complaint is put an end to. Again, sometimes funds once allotted for works sanctioned are held back by some subor-

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[Mr. R. Everard.]

dinate agency. There is an instance of a road from Alwaye to Pallikkara *via* Puthenkurisu. Rev. Fr. Kuriakose Vettikkapalli said that its progress had been checked by various obstacles. I do not want to go into the details. Mr. Everard knows them. When one Executive Engineer comes, he pursues a certain policy. Another man comes and he pursues a different policy. I may also mention the instance of bridges in the Tiruvalla-Mavelikara road. When the Dewan inspected the road, he found that, in a road which has cost a lot of money, a number of small bridges which were indispensable to make the road really useful were left out last year. Government sanctioned some money to construct bridges. But in the subsequent year the funds were held up by the Engineer in charge, by submitting a prohibitive estimate, something like Rs. 30,000, for a work which ought not to have cost more than Rs. 4,000 or Rs. 5,000. Then a third man came and he submitted an estimate which was considerably below the original estimate. Somehow, things are going on causing much delay and confusion.

Another point that I want to mention is that a major portion of the funds sanctioned each year for the P. W. D. is spent only towards the latter part of the year, when the monsoon and the floods are at their worst. Officers would seem to be in a hurry towards the end of the year, in Mithunam or Karkatakam, to spend all the funds so that as little money as possible could lapse. That, I think, is a very undesirable state of things, resulting in frantic haste and much waste. Therefore, I press upon Government the desirability of adumbrating a comprehensive scheme so that the funds at the disposal of the Government may be utilised in the most equitable manner possible, with the result that the people of the country may be induced and encouraged to make some sacrifices themselves for securing the invaluable benefits of easy and rapid communications.

MR. R. EVERARD: Sir, Mr. K. C. Mammen Mappillai has touched some grounds and other members have also spoken about giving over village roads to local inhabitants. I may say that, if local inhabitants would only come forward, the budget grant for these works could be handed over to them.

PRESIDENT: I do not think that Mr. K. C. Mammen Mappillai spoke about this. He would have a comprehensive scheme for road making.

MR. R. EVERARD: The scheme of Mr. Mammen Mappillai may be considered.

As regards the specific works referred to, I may say that the road from Alwaye was not taken up, because the land-owners who promised to hand over the land free did not do so. There is some hitch. That was why the work was stopped. As regards the Tiruvalla road, we were able to provide a bridge at Alanturuttu. The other bridges are being investigated.

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MR. A. HOOGEWERF: I just want to have this information from Mr. Everard. Is it not possible to adjust the maintenance of roads at that part of the year when rains could be availed of, so that consolidation of materials could be more effectively secured with the help of rain water? A good deal of money can be saved in this way.

MR. R. EVERARD: That is what we are doing. We are taking advantage of rains.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: My motion is almost the same as that of Mr. Mammen Mappillai. Hence I would like to say a few words about it. It is not with the object of reducing the allotment that I have risen to speak, but simply to say a few words about the general administration of the Public Works Department. The first thing that strikes me is its top-heaviness. It has been somewhat lessened last year, but even now it cannot be said that it is altogether free from that blame.

PRESIDENT: From what blame?

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: Top-heaviness. Let us take the case of the Executive Engineers. Their present number cannot perhaps be reduced, except by a single one. From six, however, it may certainly be reduced to five. As regards the Assistant Engineers, I have no hesitation in saying that their number need not be greater than that of the Executive Engineers. From the number of Supervisors and Sub-Engineers, I think an appreciable reduction can be made. Coming to the Overseers, it is better that such a class of officers does not exist at all. (*Laughter.*) The greater the number of intermediaries, the laxer is their supervision. The Overseers will go and inspect and report to the Supervisors. The Supervisors would say *ditto* to those reports and pass them on to the Assistant Engineers. These officers seldom care to verify facts by personal inspection and hence pass the reports on in their turn to the Excutive Engineers. It is not in the nature of things that these officers would care to scrutinise anything unanimously approved by all their subordinates. Ultimately, therefore, it is the Overseer who controls the situation; and he being a low-paid officer, there is every room for misapplication, if not for misappropriation, of large sums.

As regards the financial administration of the department, I am aware that there are recent Government rules and orders strictly limiting the powers of the executive officers, but, as matters stand at present, they are observed more in their breach than in their observance. Works are done without proper estimates, not to speak of sanctioned estimates, and payments are made beyond the estimated amounts. These are the main defects in the financial administration of the department. If this state of affairs is not remedied, there will be absolutely no control over the prevailing wastage. Every one who spoke here spoke of wastage, and not without reasons. First of all, there is the lack of strict official control over the expenditure. The Executive Engineer in each division

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[MR. T. K. Velu Pillai.]

gets money by cheques. The cheques go to the Account Office only after the amounts have been paid. Even recently an instance occurred of the whole amount due under a specified item of work being paid, when only half the work had been finished. The Account Officer will be able to find it out only one or two years afterwards, when all the money drawn under the cheque have been paid.

MR. K. GEORGE: I may assure the member that I can find it the next month.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON: You can find it out if you want; but it is not generally found out so early, and even if you find it out, you have absolutely no power over the delinquents. This is the state of affairs at present and it is in a department which deals with 30 to 40 lakhs of rupees per annum. If such laxity were to exist, there is absolutely no use in crying out that there is wastage. Only when you have strict control over the details of expenditure and a strict annual audit, will you be able to find out whether there is any leakage, and where that leakage, if any, exists.

A few words about the Workshop and what is called the Ice-House, and I shall conclude. I may say—I think my information is accurate—that the Workshop has been working absolutely at a loss. It is no use to work it in the present condition, if such is the fact. The object of having a Workshop is not exactly to earn a gain for the Government, but it is to the interest of the Government to work it on a commercial basis. As matters stand at present, I understand that no proper accounts are kept, and that no proper assets and liability statements or profit and loss statements are prepared at the end of the year. If such statements are not prepared annually, there is absolutely no means of knowing whether these institutions are profitable or whether they are being worked at a loss. I would therefore suggest that stricter watch should be kept over these institutions, and, if possible we should work them on commercial lines.

PRESIDENT: The House will now adjourn for lunch and will meet again at 3 P. M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at 2. 12 P. M. and met again at 3 P. M.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: Sir, I crave the indulgence of this Council when I remind them that in dealing with demands for grants we have to realise our position as a body invested with important powers. On most matters our decision is final, as I am sure that the Government which have been pleased to set us on the highroad to constitutional progress, will not ordinarily think of overriding our decisions; for, that would mean a frustration of their own aims and objects. Some of my friends on both sides of the House have, by their observations, contributed to the apprehension that the scope and functions of this Council, as distinguished from those of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, have not been clearly realised. For several years it was my

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privilege as a member of that Assembly to place the grievances of the people before the Government for redress with an appeal to their sense of justice and statesmanship. But sitting here in this Council with a non-official majority we feel as much responsibility for the proper conduct of business as any member on the opposite side. And as I find that our rights and duties are not being sufficiently recognised in the course of the discussions, as I find non-officials making representations of the Assembly pattern and officials speaking in the Assembly fashion, I have ventured to make a passing reference to the difference in authority between the two institutions.

I am glad to support my friend, Mr. Mammen Mappillai, in his proposal for the reduction of the staff of the Public Works Department.

PRESIDENT: That was not his proposal.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: That is a sure consequence of his motion being carried. If the amount of money sanctioned for works is to be reduced, the staff has to be reduced also and therefore my observations are quite relevant. It has been brought to the notice of Government in several sessions of the Assembly that we were having too many Executive Engineers and Assistant Engineers. No doubt the Government has begun to bring down their number, but a further and more rapid retrenchment should be effected in the interests not only of finance but also of efficiency. Take for instance the striking differences in the territorial jurisdiction of the various departments. The D. P. W. district is a different unit from the Revenue Division, and the Police and Registration districts are dissimilar in extent. If the P. W. D. will conform to the Rvenue Divisions, much unnecessary expenditure may be prevented. Our engineers are all of them men of ability and the department is an efficient one. I am sure that the present Chief Engineer will maintain it in its present state of efficiency and hand it over with unabated vigour to his successor when he lays down his office.

Sir, the Public Works Department has now very little power of initiation or independent action. They are to Government what particular vehicles are to medicines. The Excise Department wants an expensive inspector's office at Nedumangad; the Commissioner addresses Government on the subject, and perhaps interviews the Dewan; the proposal is then accepted and the Chief Engineer is requested to submit a plan and estimates. The Conservator of Forests wants a palatial district office in Trivandrum and the Chief Engineer is again asked to start the work immediately. But when successive Chief Engineers place before Government sensible proposals for making more roads and bridges and canals which will be of advantage to the people at large, successive administrations have 'recorded' them and preserved them in their archives. Sir, it is time that we gave up this inordinate desire for bricks and mortar and portland cement in the shape of buildings. We want communications, roads, railways, and irrigation and water works. This will necessitate more Overseers and Supervisors and tend to a reduction in the number of controlling officers. There is another reason why we

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[Mr. N. Ramakrishna Pillai.]

should not have a large number of Executive and Assistant Engineers. This is a time of large salaries and when technical men are in demand all over India, and when other States are prepared to give better pay, our officers should also be justified in asking for better prospects. There is no use in shutting our eyes to the situation. I repeat that all waste should be avoided with scrupulous care. I have protested in the Assembly on several occasions against the policy of erecting buildings, inconveniently large and prodigiously expensive, for schools and colleges. Several of my friends have joined in the cry. But it was all in the wilderness and Government thought that they were always in the right. But we have heard the Director of Public Instruction himself telling us during this very session that a school becomes unwieldy when it takes in more than 500 students. I need hardly remind this Council of the indiscipline in schools which is fresh in our memory. Let us not therefore perpetuate this time-honoured blunder when the Director of Public Instruction himself has come to our rescue.

In this connection I wish to say a word in favour of one or two public buildings of another description. We have travellers' bungalows in all manner of places, but the subjects of His Highness the Maha Raja are being subjected to grave difficulties in sanitoriums like Ponmudi and Courtallam. Some small amounts spent in this direction will be more than compensated in the advantages that would result to the people. It is time that Government altered the channels through which the Public Works Department is now spending the funds sanctioned for the purpose and gave up the habit of viewing these questions from the ancient watch-towers of departmental infallibility. I hope the tax-payer's money will be utilised with more circumspection and greater advantage to the State. With these words I support the motion before the House.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: Sir, in supporting this motion I would like to point out the necessity of framing some rules by which this department may be directed to undertake works in accordance with their urgency and importance. As instances of works of a very urgent nature, I may be permitted to refer to the necessity of opening and improving a canal and one or two drainage channels for which the people and the Assembly members of the Vaikam taluk have been persistently praying for the last so many years. On account of the construction, by Government, of the Valianappuzha bund in 1062, the cultivation of nearly a third part of the Vaikam taluk has year after year been damaged by the floods for want of an outlet to the neighbouring lake; and the obstruction to drainage has since then been so great and serious that the town of Vaikam is at present one of the most unhealthy in the State. In 1094 the then Dewan Peishcar of Kottayam, Mr. Anantanarayana Aiyar, on hearing of the serious damage to cultivation there, visited the affected locality and enthusiastically took measures at once to open this canal—known as the Kaniantodu—and

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a good deal of progress was made by his encouragement. But the matter dropped, I believe, with his departure. To the representations made last year by the Vaikam member in the Popular Assemby, this was the reply given by the Dewan:

"I find that the canals you have referred to will not be very costly. I do not see why the works have not been undertaken till now. They could have been taken up and executed one by one. The cost is only Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 4,000 in each case. I shall ask the Chief Engineer to start and complete two of these drainage canals next year. I am sure that it will give you considerable relief from the submersion you are suffering from."

I understand that in Medam last the Dewan himself kindly undertook to visit this locality and was satisfied that the works were urgently necessary.

In spite of all this, in spite of the hard fact that for the last 35 years a large population has been enduring great misery with patience and hope, and in spite of the readiness of a very sympathetic Government to grant their prayer, the Engineering Department has succeeded in omitting this out of their list of urgent works for the coming year. Sir, I believe this department has absolutely no idea as to the urgent nature of the works they have to undertake; at any rate, I am sure, the order of of urgency has no place in their calculation.

The practice of submitting very costly estimates and thereby discouraging the Government from sanctioning such schemes has also to be condemned. The delay of the Government in sanctioning the extension of the boat jetty at Vaikam which is so urgently necessary in the interests of the numerous passengers who land at Vaikam is an illustration in point. I understand that an estimate for Rs. 70,000 had been submitted on this account and that in consequence the proposal has not been accepted by Government. An extension of the jetty for ordinary purposes would not have cost anything more than Rs. 1,000 or Rs. 2,000, while the benefit rendered to the passengers would have been incalculable.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I wish to make one or two observations on this motion. As rightly observed by Mr. Mammen Mappillai, there is certainly a wrangling in the matter of distribution of funds. Mr. Kunjitomman wanted the North Travancore roads to be taken up. Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai wanted some canals in his constituency to be put in order. Mr. Panjikaran wanted the opening of roads in the Shertallai taluk. Similar suggestions are likely to be made by other members also. Perhaps the Chief Engineer himself may not be able to discuss such questions in the course of his reply in a few minutes. It is therefore extremely important that some suitable arrangement should be made by the Government themselves before drafting the detailed budget so as to bring about an equitable distribution of funds throughout the State. With that end in view, I would suggest that an advisory committee of, say, seven or nine members of this House, elected by the non-official members representing the respective Divisions, may be constituted, and the detailed budget may be submitted to them for such scrutiny as they desire, and then the funds may be distributed for each Division and the members themselves may be asked to distribute

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[Mr. V. Subba Aiyar.]

the same in the order of urgency. I should think that the debates we are now having may not serve any very useful purpose. The Committee proposed by me would be able to settle this matter more satisfactorily. Of course these debates serve the purpose of bringing to pointed attention the needs of various localities; but the Committee would be able to say that so much should be allotted to meet such needs and also determine the order of urgency. Hence I should think that a standing committee may be appointed for this purpose. I may also mention to this House that this is what obtains elsewhere. We find that in the Madras Legislative Council such standing committees are attached to each important department of public activity, and I am sure that such a system, although it has no satatutory sanction, may be introduced by the Dewan. A committee of that nature will solve many problems that are brought before this House more advantageously and on a more satisfactory basis than now.

I have one other observation to make and that relates to the Railway Department. The sum of Rs. 23 lakhs found in the budget under the allotment for the P. W. D. is inclusive of Rs. 18,000 for the reconnaissance survey. In view of the Financial Secretary's statement regarding the want of control on our part or rather the absence of particulars for checking the accounts of the Railway Department, I should like to see that at least the new line that is proposed to be introduced is worked departmentally as a State concern, and by the time the Railway scheme takes shape the State might send out somebody who may be asked to study the working of the Traffic Department and the Railway Accounts Department in British India, so that we may work it as a State concern, pure and simple. We may then be able to avoid the complaints that have been put forward by the Financial Secretary himself. In regard to the existing railway, though it is called the State Railway, it is not so in reality. This is all that I have to say in connection with this motion.

MR. V. RAMAN PILLAI: I rise to support the motion. I think that it will not be out of place, if I mention certain urgent local needs. I refer to the breaches that occurred to the bund on both sides of the Kallada river for some years.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR: May I rise to a point of order? We are just at the question whether a particular item of expenditure ought to be sanctioned or not. Strictly speaking, this ought to be discussed at the time when the general discussion of the budget took place—I mean the question whether the P. W. D. or any other department omitted to make provision for a particular item of work so that action may be taken. Any amount of criticism at this stage in regard to that matter will not be in the least of any avail. The question is whether the proposed reduction should be made and whether in the matter of executive administration anything can be done. That may be relevant, but not that this work should be attended to or that work should not be attended to.

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PRESIDENT: That is not what the member says. He brings to notice local wants. You may with some difficulty perhaps bring it under policy.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY: It is local policy.

PRESIDENT: You can include it under policy only by a stretch of language.

MR. V. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, you yourself inspected East Kallada and made certain recommendations to the P. W. D. Now in the detailed budget, I was not able to find anything in the nature of any work to be done in that locality. I believe I am not out of place when I say that that work is the right sort of work that has to be attended to immediately. For, during the last four or five years during the rainy weather, even houses were washed away. One place was completely under water with the result that famine ensued and the people were under great distress. The Government had to come in for helping the poor people of the place. All this must convince Government of the need for restoring these bunds to their original condition. I hope, therefore, that the P. W. D. will take into consideration this circumstance also in distributing funds for works in 1098. I submit this fact before this House so that it may also be taken into consideration by the proposed committee in case it is appointed.

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN: പൊതുമരാമത്തുവകയ്ക്കു വലുതായ ഒരു തുക ബഡ്ജറ്റിൽ അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഉൾനാടുകളിൽ റോഡുകളുണ്ടാക്കുന്നതിനോ ഗതാഗതസൌകര്യത്തിനോ ഏതെങ്കിലും ഏർപ്പാട് ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതായി ഞാൻ ചിന്തിക്കുന്നില്ല. അങ്ങനെയുള്ള സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ റോഡുകളുടെ ആവശ്യകതയെപ്പറ്റി പല പ്പോഴും നിർബന്ധിക്കുകയും റോഡുകൾ ആവശ്യമാണെന്നു പ്പോട്ട് ചെയ്കയും ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ട്. അതുകൊണ്ടാണ് ഗതാഗതസംഗതിയിൽ വൈക്കംചേർത്തല മെമ്പറന്മാർ അവരുടെ താലൂക്കുകളിലെ ആവശ്യങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റിപ്പറഞ്ഞത്. മിസ്റ്റർ ജി. പരമേശ്വരൻപിള്ള സൂചിപ്പിച്ചതുപോലെ, ദേശീയാവശ്യങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റിപ്പറയുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു സഭയുടെ സമയത്തെ ഞങ്ങൾ വ്യയം ചെയ്യുന്നു. എന്നാൽ അങ്ങനെ ചെയ്യാതിരിക്കാൻ ഞങ്ങൾക്കു സാധിക്കുന്നതല്ല. എന്തെന്നാൽ ഗതാഗതമാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളില്ലാത്തതുകൊണ്ടു ഞങ്ങളുടെ മിക്കവാറും ജനങ്ങൾ കഷ്ടപ്പെടുന്നു. ഞാൻ മുൻപുപറഞ്ഞതുപോലെ, കോട്ടയത്തിന്റെ വടക്കുള്ള മെയിൻറോഡുപോലും നല്ലസ്ഥിതിയിൽ വച്ചിട്ടില്ല. പണം അനുവദിച്ചുള്ള സംഗതിയിൽ പോലും മുഴുവൻ തുകയും ചിലവാക്കുന്നില്ല. വില്ലേജ് റോഡുകളുടെ കാര്യം പറയുകയാണെങ്കിൽ, അവയെ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരിൽ യാതൊരുത്തരും കണ്ടിട്ടില്ല.

പുത്തൻറോഡുകൾ വെട്ടുന്നതിനും റോഡുകളുടെ അറ്റകുറ്റം തീർക്കുന്നതിനും മിക്കപ്പോഴും കൺട്രാക്ടർമാർ എന്ന ഒരു കൂട്ടരെ പ്രത്യേകം ഏർപ്പെടുത്തിക്കൊള്ളുകയാണു പതിവ്. അതാതു സ്ഥലത്തെ സ്വദേശികളെത്തന്നെ വിളിച്ചു നടത്തുവാൻ പ്രത്യേകം ശ്രദ്ധിച്ചിരുന്നുവെങ്കിൽ വേലകൾ കുറെക്കൂടി നന്നായിരിക്കുമായിരുന്നു. ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിലേക്കു വലിയഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരും ചെറിയ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരും ധാരാളമുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഇതെല്ലാം അധികച്ചിലവിനല്ലാതെ ചിലവു ചുരുക്കി വേലശരിയായി നടത്തുന്നതിന് ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ നിലയിൽ വേണ്ടിടത്തോളം പ്രയോജനപ്പെട്ടു കാണുന്നില്ല. താലൂക്കുബോർഡുകളോ വില്ലേജ് ബോർഡുകളോ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തി പ്രസ്തുത ബോർഡുകളുടെ ചുമതലയിൽ അതാതു പ്രദേശത്തെ പുതിയ റോഡുകളും അറ്റകുറ്റ വേലകളും നിർവഹിക്കുന്നതിനും ഡി

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[Mr. A. Hoogewerf.]

ഇപ്പാർട്ടുമെൻറിൽ നിന്നും ഓരോ സ്ഥലത്തു നടത്തുന്ന വേലകളും ഈ ബോർഡുകളുടെ സഹകരണത്തോടെ നടത്തുന്നതിനും ഏർപ്പാട് ചെയ്യുന്നതു കൂടാതെ ചിലവിൽ കൂടുതൽ പ്രയോജനം വരുമാറ് ഓരോ വേലകളും നിർവ്വഹിക്കുന്നതിന് ഉപയുക്തമാണ്.

THE REV. FR. KURIAKOSE VETTIKKAPPALLI: Sir, the various arguments put forward by the members who have spoken before show that apparently a sense of proportion is wanting between expenditure and requirements. I have therefore to support strongly the appeal made by Mr. G. Parameswaran Pillai for appointing an advisory committee for the purpose of regulating expenditure according to the needs and requirements of the various localities. Such an advisory body was appointed a few years ago in Cochin. That Committee consisted of a few officers and also non-officials selected from different parts of the State. They sent their recommendation in the matter, and now, in Cochin, the P. W. D. is working in comformity with that recommendation to the entire satisfaction of the people concerned. Similarly, a committee may be appointed here also to report what works should be immediately taken up and what may be postponed to a later period.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: May I know whether, if the advisory committee is appointed, travelling allowance will not have to be given to non-official member to enable them to travel through all parts of the country to ascertain their requirements in the matter?

THE REV. FR. KURIAKOSE VETTIKKAPPALLI: I think that the rules which hold good for other committees will also hold good in the case of this Committee.

MR A. HOOGEWERF: Sir, I have already spoken on P. W. D. methods in the general discussion on the budget. It is my humble opinion that half the number of the officers in this department may be done away with with impunity. The department is certainly top-heavy, and the edifice may, at any moment, topple over the head of the Financial Secretary and crush him to death, unless the members seated on his right and left—the Chief Secretary and the Law Member—come to his help to avert the fall. I would not vote for the reduction of a single pie in the P. W. allotments. As far as I can see, what every member on this side of the House insists upon is that there should be *no public waste of funds*,—no superfluity of offices, no undertaking of works of doubtful utility, no elaborate, costly and unnecessary improvements to existing communications, no useless ornamentations to buildings aiming at spectacular effect, at the sacrifice of space and comfort—when there is such crying need for buildings and communications all over the country, the necessity and usefulness of which are unquestionable, and which will greatly help in the development of the country and the prosperity of the people.

About 12 years ago, seven P. W. Divisions were formed with nine Executive Engineers, besides the Chief and the Deputy Chief Engineers.

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I shall not refer to the host of Assistant Engineers, Sub-Engineers, Supervisors and Overseers who were also created at the time. Seven Divisions with nine Executive Engineers were more than an anomaly. It was absolute waste of public funds during these several years. So was the luxury of a Deputy Chief Engineer. All honor to you, Sir, for applying the pruning-knife, I would say, the Geddes axe to the P. W. D. morbid outgrowths and excrescences. The knife and the axe have still to be applied, without mercy or quarter, both to the present staff and expenditure on buildings and communications, and the funds thus saved have to be directed into right channels. When the present Chief Engineer retires and two Executive Engineers close their terms of office in two years' time, these vacancies should not be filled up. Four Divisions, I submit, will be ample, *i. e.*, the northern and the central, conterminous with the two Revenue Divisions, and the Trivandrum and the Southern Divisions including the Kodayar irrigation works. The Chief Boiler Inspector being styled an Executive Engineer is a misnomer. I know it may not be possible to place a number of officers on the pension list all at once. The services of some of them may be utilised in many other ways, particularly in the opening of the new railway, and probably in the development of industries.

I heard a great deal said just now about a crack in the Kallada bridge. Yes, it is a crack in the Kallada bridge. Cement and paint—and I would add 'efficiency,' like charity, covers a multitude of sins—cracks and other *et ceteras*. There is a crack in the Law College also. Tell it not in Goth, publish it not in the streets of Askelon! Look at this picture and that. The great Public Offices were built by Mr. Barton with the help of a Supervisor and an Overseer. That was when engineering science had not advanced so much and the use of cement was not much known. Sir T. Madhava Rao's statue stands gazing at this edifice without cracks and breaks. Then there is the Vanchiyur School costing about six lakhs, while the school built by missionary agency standing not far away and accommodating, probably, the same number of students, cost only about Rs. 60,000. There is another building coming up—the College Hostel—on which a lot of money is being uselessly spent. There is said to be much patronage as also much leakage in the matter of P. W. D. contracts and works. All this must cease, once and for all. Not a single pie out of the tax-payer's hard earnings should hereafter filter into a contractor's or anybody else's pocket. It is during your time, Sir, that the country expects patronage, corruption and malpractices to become things of the past. The advisory board suggested by Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai is absolutely necessary, for the several reasons stated by him, not only for the P. W. D., but for all State Departments.

MR. K. P. RAMAN PILLAI: Sir, I shall not say anything against the suggestions that have been made in this House for dealing with local grievances. But I feel compelled to draw the attention of this House to the inevitable necessity of roads having to take a direction towards the unexplored and unpopulated areas in proportion to the

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[Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai.]

crying needs of the people, especially in an agricultural country like Travancore. With a growing population it becomes necessary to increase the production and to tap the unexplored resources of the country. I listened carefully to the complaints made by various members of this House to the leakage in the sums allotted for maintenance and also to the fact that they do not get their money's worth in the maintenance of roads and buildings. In that connection, I should like the members to remember that the P. W. D. is a spending department. They spend Rs. 23 lakhs or more. Whatever that be, in a spending department, if members insist that every allotment for maintenance or original works, should find its place, or go to the destination for which it is intended, I submit that there must be very efficient and proper supervision. To argue that the staff should be reduced, and, at the same time, to say that there should be no leakage, I submit, are propositions inconsistent with each other.

I heard some members saying that the Workshop is not doing good work and that it ought to be abolished. In a department like the P. W D. in Travancore, which does much useful and substantial work, I think the Workshop is a very necessary institution and, so far as I am aware, without the help of a Workshop it will not be possible to run the department efficiently. I also heard it mentioned that, in order to ensure the moneys being spent properly, the maistries should be made permanent. In that connection, one has to remember that the allotment made to the department also should be made permanent. Otherwise, when this House reduces the allotment for the department, the permanent hands will have also to be proportionately reduced. And, if these hands are made permanent, there will not be any chance of reduction, and that, I believe, is one of the reasons why these temporary men are retained in the service.

With these observations, I support the motion.

Mr. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI: Sir, I wish to make a few observations on the subject. For some time in the past, there seems to have been an outcry against the Public Works Department. It has been a persistent outcry and has been brought to the notice of Government in various connections. The department in question, seeing that the outcry is growing in intensity, thought that they would withdraw themselves practically from the crowded centres of population and avoid public gaze, as far as possible, with the result that, in the near past, their activities have been directed to sparsely populated places such as the hilly regions. In connection with the discussion on the previous motion, though the Chief Engineer attempted with doubtful success to support certain grants by referring them to some proposed irrigation works, the Conservator of Forests came forward to point out cumulative advantages and said that the grant was for roads tending much to promote forest development. Probably, we are not in a position exactly to understand the precise reasons for the recent change in the sphere of the

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activities of this department ; probably too the engineers think with the poets that distance lends enchantment to the view. But the public should not allow themselves to be lulled into the belief that the department is working all right. The current operations of a department like this ought to be very closely scrutinised from the standpoint of their utility to the general public. In that connection, though there is some apparent 'rankling'—as somebody put it in various centres of population in the matter of demand for further extension of public works of utility, manifesting itself in mutual recriminations, yet I think that it is reconcilable in this sense: that is to say, it indicates the demand for public works not only in isolated centres, but throughout the thickly populated areas in the State. It is not purely as the outcome of parochial patriotism that this matter is brought up before this House; it is a keen necessity experienced in several centres. To do away with this interprovincial rankling, a scheme was suggested to Government by Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai. In the absence of any better, it may be accepted. I am rather particular that non-official members should be present on the proposed Board. It is essential that men acquainted with the different localities and experienced officers connected with the P. W. D. should be entrusted with the work of drawing up a successful scheme to regulate the necessity as well as the urgency as regards the works to be taken up. For the time being we shall be content with that.

The motion, though shaped as dealing with a particular cut, is directed against the executive side of the department as well. Comparisons occasionally are favoured in this House, although they are generally odious. Comparing the number of appointments in Travancore with that beyond the ghats, one is tempted to say that there is a plethora of engineers in our midst. With the reduction in the estimates for the P. W. D., I wonder whether all these Executive Engineers may find themselves fully occupied during the year. The total cost of the establishment of the Chief Engineer as well as the Executive Engineers comes to about Rs. 5 lakhs, while the amount that has to be spent by the department comes to about Rs. 23 lakhs. The question naturally and legitimately arises whether, to spend Rs. 23 lakhs, we require officers entailing an expenditure of about Rs. 5 lakhs. That seems to be a little top-heavy. I would urge this aspect of the question upon the attention of my friends and Government alike.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: Sir, may I know when the timeallotted for this Demand expires?

PRESIDENT: The time will expire at 3-55 P. M.; we have got 55 minutes more.

MR G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I move that the question be now put.

MR. V. SUBBA AIYAR: Sir, the usual practice is that a member who has not spoken on the motion before the House should move for closure, because otherwise it will not be fair to the members who have not spoken.

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[Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai.]

MR. M. NILAKANDA PILLAI: Sir, though we have an Executive and two Assistant Engineers in this town, certain roads are in a very miserable condition.

PRESIDENT: It is purely a local matter.

MR. M. NILAKANDA PILLAI: That is a very urgent matter, Sir. Though there are ten members of this Council residing in this town, nobody has come forward with any suggestion for the improvement of the communications in the town.

From Chempupanippura up to Pazhavangadi, nobody, I believe, has paid any attention to the road. During summer it is full of dust; and it is slushy in the rainy season. It is a very narrow road and most of the heavy traffic is going through that way to the landing ghats. I think that road must be broadened. I was told that there was a proposal to cover the Cochar. I think it is very urgent that the Cochar should be covered.

Another very important thing is that a road is urgently wanted from Puthenchantai to the Vanchiyur School. Teachers and boys have to go through paddy fields to reach the Vanchiyur School. They must be given a separate road and it is one of the most urgent needs of Trivandrum.

Another matter is that the Putterikandam field should be covered immediately. It is a breeding place for mosquitoes. The town is becoming more and more unhealthy because of mosquitoes.

PRESIDENT: That relates to sanitation.

MR. M. NILAKANDA PILLAI: The Putterikandam field, if it is not covered immediately, will affect the health of the people. The covering has to be done through the agency of the P. W. D.

PRESIDENT: The agency may be the Public Works Department, but it is sanitation.

MR. M. NILAKANDA PILLAI: With these words, I resume my seat.

MR. K. C. MAMMEN MAPPILLAI: Sir, I have nothing to say by way of reply. I withdraw my motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

***Motion* 173.**

The following motion fell through, as it raised substantially the same issue as the previous motion.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON:

137. To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 25·13 lakhs under Demand XXII by Rs. 1,00,000.

***Motion* 174.**

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I beg to make the following motion:

174. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 84,352 for minor irrigation works by Rs. 100.

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Sir, I have brought forward this motion only to draw the attention of the Chief Engineer to the fact that out of a total expenditure of nearly Rs. 25 lakhs only a very small sum of Rs. 50,000 is allotted under original minor irrigation works. I need not dilate upon the urgent necessity for minor irrigation development. In answer to a question it was said that certain terms had yet to be settled between the ryots and the Government and that the matter was still under correspondence. I should like that the matter is settled early and that the works are taken up as early as possible. I also request that the Chief Engineer may allow a little more money for the development of minor irrigation.

MR. R. EVERARD: Sir, I rise to oppose the motion. Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai says that his object in bringing forward this resolution was only to call attention to the inadequacy of the allotment and the urgent need for providing greater irrigation facilities. I have to inform the House that a sum of over Rs. 17,000 is provided for the maintenance of minor irrigation works and a sum of Rs. 50,000 for improvements. It is not unknown to some at least of the members of this House that these works have generally been in a neglected condition for decades and that successive administrations have tried to cope with the problem. I agree that they require improvements urgently. Under the Irrigation Regulation and the rules thereunder the land-owners benefited by those works have to bear a certain proportion of the cost of improvements, and, after these improvements have been carried out, they should maintain them in good condition. There are numerous works which require such restoration and, with my existing staff, the necessary investigations and the preparation of estimates could not be got through expeditiously. Even when estimates are prepared, the negotiations with the land-owners through Dewan Peishkars in the matter of contributions take a very long time. Under the circumstances, even if larger sums are provided for such improvements, they run the risk of lapse. So the proper policy appears to be to prepare estimates for three or four works and carry on negotiations about them, and when their execution is put in hand, to prepare estimates for three or four other works. I would also suggest that the members consult their constituencies and evolve some arrangements which will do away with the long delay that occurs now and help the expeditious execution of works. I shall be very pleased to render whatever assistance is possible from me in this direction.

As mentioned already, a sum of Rs. 50,000 is provided for improvements in 1098. I shall be more than pleased if this sum is wholly expended in 1098. In view of unavoidable delays in negotiations and the consequent risks of lapse of grants, I do not think that it will be of much use to increase the allotment. I hope that Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai will, in view of these explanations, withdraw his motion.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI: I withdraw the motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

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[The President.]

PRESIDENT: I now put to the vote of the House, Demand XXII—Public Works Department—for a sum not exceeding Rs. 25·13 lakhs *minus* Rs. 8,000.

The motion was carried and the grant made.

Demand XXIII—Anchal Department.

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR: Sir, I beg to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 3·69 lakhs under Demand XXIII—Anchal Department.

***Motion* 175.**

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: Mr. President, the Anchal Department is purely a commercial department and has been regarded as a paying department. Till recently, when certain items have been debited to the Anchal Department, it has become a department with a deficit. I find that, in respect of stationery, Rs. 53,800 is charged against the Anchal Department. I find—

MR. K. GEORGE: Sir, the motion has not been formally moved by the Member.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: I beg to make the following motion:

175. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 37,320 for transit contract by Rs. 5,000.

I find, again, that Rs. 14,500 has been debited to the Anchal Department for printing work done, and another Rs. 20,000 for stamps, etc. I augur, from this conversion of a profit-giving department into a deficit department, that the prices of stamps and cards are likely to be raised in the near future, in order that the department may be enabled to pay its working cost. If that is the policy, then certainly I must submit to this House that a free hand must be given to this department, if it chooses to take it up, to run it purely as a commercial concern. If the department takes its paper from the Government stores, and has to pay its value at the market rates,—

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR: Sir, I rise to a point of order. The member has tabled a motion only in respect of transit contract.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: I am at the stage of retrenchment, and am referring to one item of retrenchment. If I should not refer to others, I would say nothing.

PRESIDENT: That is what you are suggesting?

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR: I suggest that the department may be allowed to purchase its own paper, and do its own printing, so that it may be tried whether the department cannot be run at less cost, and whether it cannot balance its expenses with its income.

Secondly, whenever a department is run as a commercial concern, it must be allowed to pay its officers as well as staff at market rates—

PRESIDENT: You are discussing a question of general policy for which there is no warrant in the motion you have tabled. You cannot, therefore, do it.

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